THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY BIBLE,

AS CONTAINED

In the Old and New Testament,

ATTEMPTED IN

EASY VERSE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

Containing the SACRED HISTORY, from the Babylonish Captivity, to the Destruction of Jerusalem.

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CONTAINING

The Tranſactions of about 600 Years.

HISTORY THE FIRST.

The Grandeur and Magnificence of the City of Babylon, and the King's forgotten Dream interpreted by the Prophet Daniel.

Daniel, ch. i. ii.

WHEN Judah's ſons, in captive chains,
Were taken from their native plains;
And by the cruel king's command
Left all their cities and their land;
To Babylon the nation goes,
Whoſe walls and towers ſublimely roſe,
This city early roſe to fame,
And from great Babel took its name,
By Nimrod built. But had of late
Gain'd great increaſe in ſtrength and ſtate,
'Twas a vaſt ſquare of wide extent,
Prodigious walls around it went;

Their ſtately height o'erlook'd the plain,
And armies no acceſs could gain.
Strong warlike towers in order ſtand,
And the adjacent coaſt command:
Full ſixty miles the walls were found
In vaſt circumference, moated round,
And riſing ſixty fathoms high,
They cloud the horizontal ſky.
Full ninety feet their thickneſs was;
And through an hundred gates of braſs,
The prancing ſteed, and thundering car,
With mighty armies, ruſh'd to war.
Within vaſt palaces, and towers,
And temples; all the mighty powers
Of ſovereign greatneſs brightly ſhone:
While two great empires,* join'd in one,
Gave ſtrength and glory to the throne.

Through

* About the eighteenth year of the reign of Manaſſeh, Eſarhaddon, ſon of Sennacherib king of Aſſyria, taking advantage of the confuſion conſequent on an interregnum at Babylon,

Through the high walls, with rapid ſtream,
The great Euphrates roaring came;
Between the towers he rolls his tides,
And the vaſt town his ſtream divides:
While by his wars the monarch tries
The wonderous place to populize;
And here, in captive chains, he brings
The conquer'd nations, and their kings.
Before their city was deſtroy'd,
Full eighteen years, the monarch's pride
The flower of Judah's ſons conſtrain'd
By force to leave their native land;
And numerous youth of royal line
In the unpleaſing journey join.
To Babylon they all were brought,
The learning of the Chaldeans taught,
And train'd in ſervile pomp to wait
Upon the monarch's regal ſtate.

Conſpicuous

Babylon, ſeized the government, and united the Babyloniſh and Aſſyrian empires.

Conſpicuous in the princely band
Daniel and his companions ſtand:
Theſe royal captives ſtill abode
True to the worſhip of their GOD;
In the king's feaſts they would not join,
And ſcorn'd to touch the ruddy wine.
But they their learning ſwift attain'd,
And the vaſt height of ſcience gain'd;
Healthful and vigorous, freſh and fair,
They ſtood in beauty paſt compare.

Nebuchadnezzar fill'd the throne,
And with increaſing greatneſs ſhone:
The city ſtill he beautified,
And ſtood exalted in his pride.

When night's deep ſhade had chas'd the day,
As on his bed the monarch lay,
A wonderous dream employ'd his thought,
And great ſurprize and terror brought.
He woke: it vaniſh'd into wind:
Not the leaſt trace was left behind.

The

The troubled monarch gives command
To all the wise men of the land,
To tell the vision to the throne,
And make the interpretation known.
The augur deep and learned bard,
Alike confess the task too hard:
All science useless they proclaim,
Except the monarch tell his dream.
The king, impatient of delay,
To pride, and rising rage gave way;
And in a stern determin'd strain
Commands the wise men to be slain.
But Daniel strives to interpose;
And to the GOD of Israel goes.
The GOD soon makes the secret known:
Daniel reveals it at the throne.
And fresh before the wondering king,
His words the fleeting vision bring.
A statue stood before his sight,
Dreadful in form, and polish'd bright,

Of various metals form'd. A ſtone
Was ſuddenly againſt it thrown;
Shatter'd to pieces ſoon it flew.
The ſtone to vaſt dimenſions grew,
And fill'd the earth. Thus GOD makes known
His vaſt deſigns from heaven's high throne,
And ſets before the monarch's eyes
How mighty empires fall and riſe;
Till heaven's high king ſhall ſeize the ſway,
And make the wondering world obey;
Eternal ages wear the crown,
And put all other empires down.

The viſion thus the youth explain'd,
And higheſt reputation gain'd.
The wondering king, with vaſt ſurprize,
Before his captive proſtrate lies.
Of more than mortal birth regards,
Gives him high honours and rewards,
And raiſes him to high command
Above the wiſe men of the land.

Then

Then to the king the youth commends
His three companions and his friends;
And the young men that Daniel prais'd,
Were to high ſeats of honour rais'd.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

Shadrach, Meſhach and Abednego, Daniel's Companions, having refuſed to worſhip Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image, are caſt into a Furnace of Fire, but miraculouſly preſerved.

Daniel, ch. iii.

NOW by ſmooth Cebar's rolling ſtream,
The word of GOD expreſsly came
To a young man of Aaron's race,
Ezekiel nam'd. Full in his face
GOD's glory ſhone, and fill'd with awe
He various myſtic viſions ſaw;

And his prophetic ſtrains relate
Jeruſalem's approaching fate:
This from his mouth the nation learns,
Seven years before the city burns.

Jeruſalem in ruins laid,
And all the nation captive made;
The mighty monarch roſe in pride,
In power and grandeur, and apply'd
His towering thoughts in vaſt deſigns;
And bright his ſeat of empire ſhines.

The haughty tyrant then proceeds
To the moſt impious, cruel deeds.
He a prodigious ſtatue * rais'd,
And bright in burniſh'd gold it blaz'd;
Tall as an obeliſk appear'd;
And ſoon an herald's voice was heard,
Bearing the monarch's ſtern command
To every corner of the land,

Injoining

* This golden image was made about a year after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem.

Injoining all both bond and free,
Whate'er his land, or language be,
To Dura's plain to take their way,
And there attend the ſolemn day
Of dedication. With this aim
The princes and the nobles came,
And all who wore the monarch's chain;
In haſte the place appointed gain,
And nations fill the crowded plain.

High in the air the image ſtands,
In proſpect to the adjacent lands;
Amongſt the clouds its head diſplays,
And caſts around a beamy blaze;
The wonder of the world remains,
And like a tower o'erlooks the plains.
The heralds then aloud proclaim
In Babel's mighty monarch's name,
To all the nations that appear
At his command aſſembled there,

That when they hear the muſic ſound,
They all fall proſtrate to the ground,
And worſhip his Coloſſus. They
Who this command ſhall diſobey,
And dare to rouſe a monarch's ire,
Shall periſh by devouring fire.
To pleaſe the king, the nations all
Before the wonderous image fall,
And while the abject tribes adore,
The muſic ſounds, and trumpets roar.
But three bold youths of Judah's line
Againſt the king's commandment join;
Daniel's companions they appear,
But the young prophet was not there,
No idol gods they can allow,
Nor will they to the image bow.
The envious princes at the throne,
Make the young mens refuſal known:
The frowning king in wrath commands,
And each bold youth before him ſtands.

And

And is it true, the monarch cry'd,
Swelling at once with rage and pride,
That despicable captive Jews
Our sovereign command refuse!
Dare you against my will appear!
And scorn the god that I revere!
Correct your pride! your folly learn,
And to your duty quick return.
If at the solemn music's call,
You prostrate on your faces fall;
And worship in the open space,
Belus great founder of our race;
I am your friend. But mark me well!
If you against my law rebel;
If you to stand it out intend,
And still remain too stiff to bend;
The vengeance of a king will fall,
And burn like fire against you all;
The fiery furnace' raging flame,
Perhaps may teach you to be tame:

Such

Such are the orders that I gave,
And where's the God that can you ſave!
The pious youths with glory ſhone;
They all drew nearer to the throne;
Bold Shadrach anſwer'd for the reſt,
And thus the frowning king addreſs'd:
Great monarch, hear the truth we tell,
Not with intention to rebel
We ſtand reluctant to thy nod;
But know we worſhip Iſrael's God,
Whoſe holy law will not allow
That we to any idol bow:
Our God, who this commandment gave,
Is wiſe in heart, and ſtrong to ſave:
He can reſiſt a monarch's ire,
And ſave us in devouring fire;
If ſuch his will. But ſhould his power
Forſake us in that dreadful hour;
Yet, mighty monarch, be it known,
Thy idol gods we will not own;

Nor

Nor worſhip, though thy word commands,
Yon image which exalted ſtands.
Wrath flaſhes in the monarch's eyes,
And pale with rage he thus replies:
Then as Bel lives, you ſurely burn!
And having made this ſhort return,
The ſlaves, as his command requires,
To ſeven-fold fury raiſe the fires.
Then on the youths the monarch frown'd;
At his command all three were bound
Both in their bodies and attire,
And headlong plung'd amidſt the fire.
As from a vaſt volcano came
Thick clouds of ſmoke and ſheets of flame,
And the fierce fires immediate ſlew
The men that in the furnace threw
The noble youths. But from the ſkies
Amongſt the flames an angel flies:
A cool refreſhing breeze he brings,
And a moiſt dew immediate ſprings;

The

The fierce devouring fires grow tame,
And harmless rolls the ruddy flame:
The youths unhurt, amidst the blaze
Exulting sing JEHOVAH's praise.
The haughty monarch in his pride
Comes to the flaming furnace side;
To see the raging fires fulfil
The cruel dictates of his will:
But stands astonish'd, when he sees
The pious youths enjoy the breeze;
And safe amidst the flames remain,
Which had his mighty warriors slain.
And what demands his wonder more,
Instead of three he counted four!
With looks aghast, and wild surprize,
He thus to all his nobles cries:
Hear, all ye princes! did not we,
Conformable to my decree,
Cast three young men into the flame,
Which from the land of Israel came!

Faſt were they bound; but look ye there,
Four beauteous youths unhurt appear;
Walk unconcern'd amidſt the blaze,
And ſing the GOD of Iſrael's praiſe!
The fourth is glorious in my eyes,
As ſome bright native of the ſkies.
Then, while the burning furnace blaz'd,
His lofty voice the monarch rais'd:
Shadrach and Meſhach, hear my voice!
And Abednego! ye whoſe choice
Hath been your fathers GOD to ſerve,
And higheſt honours thence deſerve;
For juſtly you revere his name,
Who can deliver from the flame:
Come forth! our royal favour gain,
And ſtand the wonder of our reign.
The noble youths the call obey,
And from the furnace take their way;
Elate and vigorous they ſpring,
And ſtand before the wondering king.

They freſh and fair unhurt remain,
Nor had they known the ſenſe of pain;
Unſing'd their bodies and attire,
Nor did they bear the ſmell of fire.
The aſtoniſh'd princes round them crowd,
And wondering nations praiſe aloud
The God who ſuch deliverance gave,
Who from devouring fire can ſave.

Then ſpake the king: Ye nations, hear
My fix'd decree, and all revere!
Bleſs'd be the God whoſe mighty power
Appear'd in the diſtreſsful hour,
And ſav'd from the devouring flame
The men that truſted in his name.
And let the God that thus appear'd,
By every nation be rever'd!
The wretch that henceforth dare deſpiſe
The God of Iſrael, ſurely dies.
Amongſt our gods not one, or all
On whom in our diſtreſs we call,

Or feign to rule the land or wave,
Is able in this way to ſave.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

Nebuchadnezzar humbled.

Daniel, ch. iv.

TO every land beneath the ſkies
Thus Babylon's great monarch cries;
Let all that dwell beneath the ſun
Regard the wonders GOD hath done.
The GOD of all, who from his throne
Will make his truth and juſtice known;
Vaſt are the wonders of his hands;
Through every age his kingdom ſtands,
Having concluded mighty wars,
And ſettled empire's great affairs;
Adorn'd my city, and my throne,
I with ſurpaſſing glory ſhone;

And ſetting now my heart at eaſe,
I in my palace ſpent my days.
But in the watches of the night
A viſion ſtood before my ſight,
Which gave me pain. At my command
The learned men before me ſtand,
In deep prophetic arts approv'd;
But none my dread ſuſpence remov'd.
At length before me Daniel came,
Whom now we Belteſhazzar name;
And thus to him I told my dream.
A tall ſtrait tree appear'd in view,
At which I wonder'd as it grew;
Stately and ſtrong its branches riſe,
Which ſpreading cover'd all the ſkies:
Green were the leaves, the fruit was good,
And food for all the earth it ſtood:
The birds its boughs their dwelling made,
And cattle lodg'd beneath the ſhade.

But ſoon, deſcending on a cloud,
An angel came, and cry'd aloud:
Let the ſharp ax the tree ſurround,
And bring it headlong to the ground:
The branches lop; tear off the leaves;
Scatter the fruit; no more it gives
The fowls a ſhelter: let them fly,
And beaſts no more beneath it lie.
But let the ſtump ſeven years remain
Amongſt the graſs and tender grain
With iron bound, and then again
'Twill bud and ſprout. This is the dream
Which as I ſlept before me came;
I woke: it vaniſh'd from my ſight,
Immediate mixing with the night.
Now Belteſhazzar, ſince high heaven
The knowledge of theſe things hath given
To thee, relieve the anxious throne,
And make the hidden meaning known.

For

For all the wiſe men of our land
To the great taſk unequal ſtand.
Thee the high Gods the gift allow;
Their ſervant, and their favourite thou!
Surpriz'd and griev'd the youth appear'd
When thus the wonderous dream he heard;
To ſpeak he ſeem'd without the power,
And ſtood aſtoniſh'd for an hour,
Let not the dream, young man, I ſaid,
Give thee ſurprize, or fill with dread:
But let me know. The youth replies,
While the big tear ſtands in his eyes,
The dream, O king, be to thy foes,
And let the meaning fall on thoſe
That hate thy reign. The tree whoſe height
In viſion thus employ'd thy ſight,
That ſpread ſo wide, and ſeem'd ſo fair,
To which the birds and beaſts repair,
Is thou thyſelf. The God of heaven
To thee hath lofty empire given:

Thee

Thee various diſtant realms obey,
And o'er the earth extends thy ſway.
But as thou heard'ſt the angel call,
Hew down the tree, and let it fall,
Cut off the branches, ſtrip the leaves,
And ſcatter wide the fruit it gives:
But let the ſtump in earth remain,
Amongſt the graſs and tender grain;
Beaten with rain, and wet with dew,
Till Sol ſeven times the ſpring renew:
Hence learn, 'tis the decree of heaven
That thou ſhalt from thy throne be driven,
With the brute beaſts to ſpend thy days,
And like an ox amongſt them graze.
But as thou ſaw'ſt the ſtump remain,
Thou ſhalt aſſume thy throne again;
Again with regal glory ſhine;
And mighty empire ſhall be thine.
Then ſhalt thou know, that in the eye
Of Heaven's Supreme all kingdoms lie;

That he beſtows each mortal crown,
Lifts up vain man, or caſts him down.
Hence, mighty king, let wiſdom's ray,
Direct the remnant of thy day:
And while the dreadful ſtroke delays,
Repent of all thy evil ways.
So ſpake the youth. Surpriz'd I heard,
And ſome ſmall time the judgment fear'd:
But dazzling pomp and boundleſs power
Swell'd my vain heart; and every hour
The ſervile crowd my praiſes ſpread,
And neither earth nor heaven I dread.
The year's full circle round was brought,
And of my dream no more I thought.
But as from my vaſt palace height
My eyes were feaſted with the ſight
Of my ſtrong walls and ſtately towers,
My ſtatues, temples, and the powers
Of ſovereign greatneſs: While the ſun
Around me in full glory ſhone,

I felt

I felt my heart with rapture ſwell,
And from my lips theſe accents fell:
Where is the monarch fills a throne
Which ſhines like that of Babylon!
What mighty walls! what ſtrength, what height,
What wonders burſt upon my ſight!
What grandeur every part diſplays!
How in the ſun the turrets blaze!
See how the marble columns ſhine!
What majeſty and glory mine!
Behold my ſeat of empire riſe
Imperial! awful in all eyes!
I built the wonders which I ſee;
What king, or god can equal me!
Theſe haughty words I ſcarce had ſpoke,
When o'er my head the thunder broke;
And from the ſky this language came,
Which like a tempeſt ſhook my frame:
Yes, haughty wretch! thou ſoon ſhalt know
That there's a God can lay thee low:

On thee he'll make his anger known;
Driven from thy palace and thy throne,
Thou with the beaſts ſhalt take thy lot;
Thy wiſdom, and thy works forgot.
No ſooner theſe dire ſounds had ceas'd,
Than I conceat myſelf a beaſt;
Inſtant I thought I went on four,
Huge horns and ſhaggy ears I wore;
And, like the father of the herd,
Graſs to all dainties now prefer'd:
An hideous bull-like roar I rais'd,
Which ſhook the palace walls. Amaz'd
My ſervants came, and wildly ſtar'd:
To come within my reach they fear'd.
With gathering force I roar'd more loud,
And ran amongſt the wondering crowd.
With ſtrange amaze my ſubjects view'd,
And to the fields my ſteps purſu'd.
The frighted cattle on me gaze,
And for a while forget to graze.

I roar

I roar more loud: and ſwift they ran
From ſuch a monſter of a man.
Seven years I in the fields remain'd,
And ſenſe of what I was retain'd;
But loſt to each aſpiring thought,
Amongſt the beaſts my food I ſought:
Beaten with rain, and wet with dew,
My hair like eagles feathers grew:
My nails like claws of fowls. At laſt
Up to the heavens my eyes I caſt,
Then upright walk: my errors learn,
And my loſt faculties return:
I reaſon'd clear, and now I prais'd
The God whoſe ſplendors round me blaz'd,
Who over wide creation reigns;
Through every age his throne remains,
Then ſoon my former throne I gain'd, *
My nobles own'd me, and I reign'd.

* The reſtoration of Nebuchadnezzar, after his ſeven years diſtraction, was one year before his death.

My wide-extended kingdom o'er,
And ſtood majeſtic as before.
Then all ye powers that own my ſway,
The righteous GOD of heaven obey;
Whoſe hand theſe wonderous works diſplays.
Holy and juſt are all his ways!
And he knows how, in duſt to hide;
Or humble the bold ſons of pride.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

Belſhazzar's impious Feaſt; and Babylon taken by Cyrus.

Daniel, ch. v.

NEAR ſeventy circling years were fled,
Since Judah's ſons were captive led,
And Zion's towers in duſt remain'd,
While five * great kings ſucceſſive reign'd.

The

* The kings that reigned at Babylon during the captivity of Judah, were, 1 Nebuchadnezzar; 2. Evilmerodach;

The grandſon of the king that laid
Jeruſalem in ruins, ſway'd
The ſceptre of great Babylon,
Till Cyrus pull'd him from his throne.
This prince, who high renown demands,
Both to the crown related ſtands
Of Media and of Perſia. He
Was choſe by Iſrael's God's decree,
His drooping captives to reſtore,
And Zion's towers to raiſe once more.
To all the toils of battle bred,
His hardy youth in camps he led;
Hereby he roſe to matchleſs fame,
And wars firſt honours were his claim.
Vaſt realms he in ſubjection lays,
While Aſia's plains around him blaze:
Great cities ſack'd, and battles won;
He now beſieges Babylon.

Their

3. Nerigliſſar; 4. Laboroſcarchod; and 5. Belſhazzar. Nebuchadnezzar reigned 37 years after the captivity, and Belſhazzar 17; the reſt of the reigns were very ſhort.

Their armies in the open field
His warlike force had made to yield;
And now, pent up within their walls,
He on the royal city falls.
Two years his lines the towers ſurround,
And yet he gains but little ground.
Such mighty walls the town incloſe,
The idle monarch mocks his foes.
Though conquering hoſts the towers aſſail,
Yet luxury and vice prevail:
The king at eaſe ſecurely ſate,
Nor dreamt of his approaching fate.
Now, while the heralds round proclaim
A feaſt in their great idol's name,
The city joins in the exceſs
Of revelling and drunkenneſs;
In feſtive mirth the nobles join;
The royal palace ſwims with wine;
And they till night the feaſt prolong
In roaring mirth and drunken ſong.

The

The loose, alluring, lofty fair
Amongst the crowd the banquet share;
Join every song with warbling lays,
And every idol god they praise.
The reeling king, amidst the roar,
His idols to exalt the more,
Commands, and soon a party brings
God's ravag'd temple's holy things:
And, standing on destruction's brink,
They in the golden vessels drink,
Which from God's altar had been brought,
And great Jehovah set at nought.
But, 'midst the riot and the noise,
A strange appearance check'd their joys:
Against the plaister of the wall
An hand and pen surpriz'd them all:
Strange mystic characters it drew.
The king, astonish'd at the view,
In vast amazement wildly star'd,
And scarce to look upon it dar'd:

To deep dismay his soul resign'd;
Strong terror shook his labouring mind;
And, pale with terror and affright,
His trembling knees together smite.
Then with loud voice the monarch cries;
Bring hither every man that's wise;
And let our learned men proceed
These wonderous characters to read.
Great things shall instantly be done
For him who shall relieve the throne.
Immediately the learned band
Strive to perform the king's command
With all their skill; but strive in vain
The mystic writing to explain.

Then, to relieve the monarch's cares,
His royal mother soon appears;
Let the king ever live, she cry'd,
Nor in his wishes stand deny'd;
For know, thy city walls contain
A wonderous man, who can explain

All hidden depths. To him is given
The Spirit of the God of heaven.
Him, ſkill'd in all the depths of thought,
From Judah's land thy grandſire brought:
His wiſdom try'd, the monarch prais'd,
And over the magicians rais'd.
Let Daniel then be call'd with ſpeed;
The wonderous writing he will read.
The monarch then in haſte commands:
Before his throne the prophet ſtands.
Art thou the man, the king enquir'd,
That, by the holy Gods inſpir'd,
Didſt my great father's dreams explain;
And waſt the wonder of his reign?
A great occaſion calls thee here:
We have beheld with ſhivering fear,
Yon figures drawn by power divine;
And dreadful in our ſight they ſhine.
But our wiſe men all ſtrive in vain,
Nor can the characters explain.

If thou the wonderous lines canſt read,
And let me know what is decreed;
Thou ſhalt a ſcarlet garment wear,
A chain of gold ſhall be thy ſhare,
And in the kingdom thou ſhalt ſtand
Exalted to the third command:
Let other men, the prophet cry'd,
The favours of the crown divide.
The writing on the wall I ſee,
This to explain belongs to me.
But firſt, great monarch, call to mind
How bright thy royal grandſire ſhin'd!
Imperial, awful, lifted high
In dazzling heights of majeſty!
But, with the inſolence of pride,
The God that rais'd him he defy'd:
The offended power to vengeance roſe;
Him from the height of empire throws,
Amongſt the beaſts to take abode,
Till he at length rever'd the God.

This

This great event to thee was known;
Yet thou in pride haſt held thy throne:
Thy feaſt with impious deeds is ſtain'd,
And in thy cups thou haſt prophan'd
This night, with inſolence and ſcorn,
The veſſels from his temple torn.
For this the God yon writing ſends,
To let thee know thy empire ends;
The God that all thy deeds ſurveys,
Hath number'd and fill'd up thy days:
Thy kingdom's weigh'd in equal ſcales,
And o'er thy war the foe prevails:
The Medes and Perſians ſeize the throne;
Thy empire falls, O Babylon!

The king commands to give the bard
The honours which he had declar'd:
But, ſwift to urge the monarch's fate,
Soon thunder'd at the palace gate
The warlike foe. The guards they ſlay,
Then through the palace take their way;

Fierce as a flame the army drives;
The king and nobles loſe their lives;
And mingled carnage ſpreads the ground,
Where late loud mirth the banquet crown'd.
The Perſian prince, with watchful care,
Had through Euphrates drove the war;
And at the ſilent midnight hour
Into the town his armies pour.
When night had wrapt the land in ſhade,
Vaſt breaches in the banks they made:
Acroſs the lands the waters fly,
And leave the channel almoſt dry:
The eager armies ford the ſtream,
And to the gates at midnight came:
The brazen gates oppoſe them not,
The drunken citizens forgot
To make them faſt: and in the ſhade
The foe an eaſy conqueſt made.
The Perſian chief, renown'd for might,
Now conquer'd in his uncle's right:

Cyrus

Cyrus the noble conqueſt gains,
And on the throne Darius reigns.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

The Prophet Daniel miraculouſly preſerved in the Den of Lions.

Daniel, ch. vi.

WHEN old Darius ſeiz'd the throne
And empire of great Babylon,
Amongſt the nobles Daniel ſate,
Long us'd to the affairs of ſtate.
The mighty kingdom vaſt and wide,
Six ſcore large provinces divide.
To each a prince the king aſſign'd,
The buſineſs of the crown to mind.
Theſe princes, ſpread o'er all the land,
Three noble preſidents command;

Examine

Examine the accompts they give,
And the vaſt revenue receive.
Of theſe good Daniel was the firſt,
And proving diligent and juſt,
The king well-pleas'd his care ſurveys,
And him intended ſtill to raiſe.
But diſcontent and gloomy hate
Seiz'd all the officers of ſtate:
They view the chief with ſcornful eyes,
With growing rancour ſee him riſe;
Seek to accuſe him to the crown,
And ſtand reſolv'd to pull him down.
Long had they ſtrove, with watchful mind,
Some error or miſtake to find
In his accompts. But all was clear.
Nor could they e'er diſgrace him there.
Inrag'd they cry'd, we ſtrive in vain!
Nor can we an advantage gain,
To cruſh this over-bearing Jew,
While we his moral conduct view!

But

But all who have obſerv'd his ways,
Muſt know how fervently he prays;
Nor can we think on any ſcore
He will conſent to pray no more.
Here let us then our plot prepare,
And we ſhall take him in the ſnare.

Then to the king, with fraudful aim,
All the aſſembled princes came:
Dread ſovereign! whoſe extended ſway
The kingdoms of the world obey;
Whoſe empire knows no bounds, they cry;
No equal thou beneath the ſky!
Thy princes and thy nobles all
With reverent awe before thee fall,
And their great conqueror adore:
There are no worlds to conquer more!
Then liſten to thy ſervants prayer,
Who make thy dignity their care:
Paſs from thy throne the high decree,
(For where's the god can equal thee!)

That

That who to any other prays
For the full ſpace of thirty days,
Shall his impiety deplore
In the deep den where lions roar:
Their greedy jaws his fleſh ſhall fill;
There let him pray to whom he will!
Let the decree with ſpeed be wrote;
When ſign'd by thee it alters not!—
The incautious king not long delays;
But tickled with their fulſome praiſe,
Not knowing their intention, he
Signs with his ſignet the decree.
Daniel beheld the writing ſign'd,
But ſtood determin'd in his mind:
Depending on JEHOVAH's aid,
Three times a day the prophet pray'd:
His window open on the ſkies
Where Zion low in ruin lies.
The eager princes now prepare
To take the good man in their ſnare;

They catch him on his knees: then bring,
And all accuſe him to the king.
The king too late his folly learns,
And much his mad decree he mourns:
The prophet's life he makes his care;
And ſtrives with all his might to ſpare,
But near the throne the nobles draw,
And plead the honour of the law
Of Medes and Perſians; never yet
Allow'd to alter or remit.—
The king in grief admits the plea:
And Daniel's brought without delay.
Truſt in thy God! the monarch cry'd:
His mighty power, ſo often try'd,
Protects the goodneſs which he gave;
And he can from the lions ſave!
Then in the den the prophet's thrown,
Againſt the mouth they roll a ſtone,
On this was fix'd the royal ſeal,
That no foul ſtratagem prevail.

When to the den good Daniel came,
The furious beasts at once grow tame:
They him with looks of kindness meet,
Crowd round, and fawning lick his feet.
But, full of grief and bitter woes,
The monarch to his palace goes:
When, anxious in his servant's cause,
From food or rest his heart withdraws;
And in confusion and dismay
He pass'd the sleepless night away.
But when the night her shades withdrew,
And rising morn appear'd in view,
Swift to the lions den he ran;
Remov'd the stone, and thus began:
O Daniel! Daniel! Oh, my friend!
Unjustly hast thou found thy end!
Except the God thou hast rever'd,
Hath in this needful hour appear'd,
To vindicate thy righteous cause,
And save thee from the lions jaws!

If yet thou liv'ſt! but ah, I fear
That I no more thy voice ſhall hear!
If yet thou breath'ſt the vital air,
Exalt thy voice! with ſpeed declare!
Kindly relieve the anxious throne,
And through the nations make it known,
That GOD, who thee ſuch wiſdom gave,
In every caſe is ſtrong to ſave.
Let the king live for ever! then
Reply'd the prophet from the den;
Thy ſervant here in ſafety lies!
For a fair native of the ſkies
My GOD hath ſent; whoſe glory bright
Shone round the den with heavenly light:
With trembling awe the lions view,
And from their helpleſs prey withdrew.
I then approach'd them undiſmay'd,
And they with me like ſpaniels play'd.
Such favour Iſrael's GOD hath ſhewn,
And hath my innocence made known;

For I from foul offence am free
Againſt my God, O king, or thee!
The king could ſcarce contain his joy,
While Daniel made this ſhort reply.
In haſte he gives command, and then
From the deep, dark-mouth'd, dreadful den
They draw the prophet up: The firſt,
Whether he faulty was or juſt,
That e'er return'd from thence. In haſte
The frowning king commands to caſt
Into the horrid yawning den,
The envious band of wicked men
That had, with helliſh rancour fir'd,
Againſt the prophet's life conſpir'd.
Then, with their wives and children all,
Into deſtruction's jaws they fall:
The furious beaſts, with horrid roar,
The falling crowd in pieces tore;
And there their wretched end they found
Before their feet could reach the ground.

The

The monarch then the orders sent,
Which fir'd the nations as they went,
Through every realm, where'er it lay,
That was subjected to his sway;
That when these wonderous deeds they hear,
The GOD of Israel they revere;
And tremble at his mighty name
From whence such great deliverance came.
For he is worthy of all praise!
Holy and just are all his ways!
On him his people may depend,
For his great kingdom hath no end.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

Cyrus makes a Decree for the Return of the Jews, and rebuilding the Temple. Several Families return: and the Foundation of the Temple is laid. The Work is carried on with great Discouragement through several Reigns: At last it is finished, and dedicated.

Ezra, from ch. i. *to* vi.

ONE year Darius held the throne
Of Perſia and of Babylon.
His kinſman Cyrus then ſucceeds,
Who ſtood renown'd for noble deeds.
This prudent prince with ceaſeleſs cares,
Settled the empire's great affairs;
And was for worthineſs renown'd
Through all the heathen nations round.
Still Daniel at the court remain'd,
And higheſt reputation gain'd:

For

For he grown old in ſtate affairs,
And equal to a nation's cares,
Attended on the Perſian throne,
And was through the vaſt empire known.
Then full diſplay'd before the ſeer
The ancient prophecies appear:
Theſe as his anxious eye purſu'd,
The great decree of heaven he view'd:
Great Jeremiah taught the ſtrain,
That Iſrael ſhould return again;
And under mild propitious ſkies
Once more the towers of Zion riſe:
When ſeventy years in Shinar's land
The humbled nation had remain'd.
Then to his God the prophet pray'd:
Nor was the promiſe long delay'd.
Great Cyrus, from the Perſian throne,
Makes Iſrael's deep diſtreſs his own;
Their God's great glories ſtrives to learn,
And makes a law for their return.

A prince

A prince amongst the tribes remain'd,
Who had the captives favour gain'd;
Of good Josiah's race he came,
And great Zerubbabel his name.
He by the monarch was decreed
Once more to lead the chosen seed
To their own land, which heaven assign'd;
And with him in commission join'd,
To oversee the holy place,
Stood Jeshua the high priest: his race
From Aaron rose; and he abode
True to the worship of his GOD.

Great Cyrus then with care restor'd
The holy vessels of the LORD;
Which Babel's king, with impious thought,
Had from his ravag'd temple brought;
Which, by fierce war and rapine gain'd,
In idol temples were detain'd.
Five thousand vessels, whose device
Exceeded those of costly price,

In

In burnish'd gold and silver burn'd;
All these the Persian king return'd.
Then over great Euphrates' stream
With silent joy the captives came:
Their hearts high boating at the view,
Could scarce believe their ransom true:
But soon they sing their growing joys,
And shout JEHOVAH to the skies.
The favour'd nation then regains
Their ancient cities and their plains:
The hill, the vale, or spreading shade,
Where their forefathers bones were laid:
Then soon at Zion's hill appear,
And hold a grand assembly there.
Then, aided by the Persian king,
They marble stones and timber bring:
And all who in the work are skill'd,
Prepare the temple to rebuild:
When, trusting in JEHOVAH's aid,
The builders the foundation laid.

But, e'er the infant structure rose,
The rumour to Samaria goes.
And all the rulers, when they hear,
Soon at Jerusalem appear,
Let us unite with you, they cry'd,
And stand to latest time ally'd.
Why should our race from you divide!
For of your GOD we stand in awe,
And square our conduct by his law.
For when at first our nation came
Across the great Euphrates' stream,
The GOD of Israel was unknown,
And every people serv'd their own.
The offended GOD in wrath proceeds,
By lions torn the nation bleeds:
Great Esarhaddon to appease
The GOD, and give his subjects ease,
A Jewish priest amongst us brought,
Who your religious worship taught:

Then

Then let us, ſince your GOD we fear,
Unite with you, and worſhip here.
To this the prince and prieſt reply:
What you requeſt we muſt deny!
Our GOD his favour hath decreed
To faithful Abraham, and his ſeed:
With us, in each religious rite,
No other nation muſt unite.

This flat denial gave offence:
Gloomy and murmuring ſoon from thence
Depart the chiefs. In wrath they join,
And ſeek to fruſtrate the deſign.
From time to time each method uſe
To trouble and diſtreſs the Jews:
And now, determin'd foes to peace,
They ſtrive to make the building ceaſe.
By open force or ſecret fraud;
Some they corrupted, ſome they aw'd;
So that the work but little gain'd
The full ſeven years that Cyrus reign'd.

And when his son the throne ascends,
They still pursue their wicked ends;
For while Cambyses bears the sway,
The building suffer'd great delay.
When the usurper * seiz'd the throne,
They make their open hatred known;
Accuse the nation to the king;
And soon a royal edict bring,
By which 'tis absolute decreed
The Jews no farther shall proceed:
The traitor slain, Darius rose,
And on again the building goes.
Now aided by the Persian throne,
And great JEHOVAH's favour known,
Which by two prophets † was declar'd,
The prince and priest no labour spar'd.
Now twenty times the circling sun
Through the twelve heavenly signs had run,
Since the great structure was begun;

When

* Smerdis the Magian. † Haggai and Zechariah.

When the glad tribes with ſhouts proclaim
The work compleat; the finiſh'd frame.
To dedication they proceed;
The incenſe ſmokes, the victims bleed;
And all religious rites appear,
Fix'd in their ancient order there.
But ſoft emotion heav'd the breaſt
Of the old fathers of the reſt,
That at Jeruſalem had been,
And had the former temple ſeen:
The preſent ſo unlike appears,
That with the ſhouts they mix their tears.

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

Of Esther and Mordecai.

Book of *Esther* throughout.

WHILE thirty years Darius reign'd,
His friendship to the Jews remain'd.
His son great Xerxes next succeeds,
And ratifies his father's deeds.
When twenty years extends his reign,
He was by impious treachery slain.
Great Ahasuerus * then arose;
And having conquer'd all his foes,
He, firmly seated on his throne,
To make his royal bounty known,
A feast for all his lords ordain'd,
Which near two hundred days remain'd.
These days being ended, seven days more
He feasts the city, Rich and poor
Might

* Called by historians Artaxerxes Longimanus.

Might in the kingly banquet join,
And quaff at will the royal wine.
At the ſame time the ladies ſhare,
In the apartments of the fair,
The queen's rich treat, with dainties crown'd,
And mirth and feſtive joys abound.

On the ſeventh day, the king elate,
As on his regal ſeat he ſate,
Commands to bring his beauteous queen,
Who was admir'd as ſoon as ſeen,
Wearing her royal crown of gold,
That all her beauty might behold.
The queen rejects the high command;
Nor will her courage bear to ſtand
Appointed as a public ſhew,
And ſet for all the town to view.
The king, enrag'd to be deny'd,
The aged ſtateſmen's counſel try'd;
Who fearing this example might
Deprive the huſbands of their right,

And

And women, forward to rebel,
Might imitate the queen too well;
Advis'd the king without delay
To put the imprudent fair away.
The king approved of what they said,
And banish'd Vashti from his bed.

Then round the land the heralds sought,
And numbers of fair virgins brought,
Array'd in beauty's blooming charms,
And worthy of a monarch's arms,
That she who best deserv'd the grace
Might take the banish'd fair one's place.

Though six successive kings had reign'd,
Since Israel's sons had freedom gain'd,
And seventy circling years were fled,
Yet wide o'er all the empire spread,
Great numbers of the Jews appear,
Who rather chose to settle there.

One Mordecai, a Jew, that sate
As porter of the palace gate,

Brought

Brought up a virgin, that in blood
Nearly related to him ſtood:
The maid in artleſs beauty ſhone;
She was preſented to the throne;
The royal favor ſoon ſhe gain'd,
And in the room of Vaſhti reign'd.

Two eunuchs,* with reſentment fir'd,
Againſt the monarch's life conſpir'd:
This from the Jew they could not hide;
Accus'd by Mordecai, they dy'd.

Supreme in favour near the throne,
Rever'd by all, proud Haman ſhone.
From hated Amalek he ſprings;
And off the offſpring of her kings.
To this proud minion of the crown,
The ſervile courtiers all bow down!
And wherefoe'er he takes his way,
With higheſt reverence homage pay.

* It is ſuppoſed, that theſe eunuchs were of Vaſhti's train, and in this manner reſented their miſtreſs's diſgrace.

But Mordecai, untouch'd by awe,
The royal favourite daily saw
With solemn stiffness on his brow,
Nor would he condescend to bow.
This Haman saw, with cavious eye
And growing rage, as he went by:
But on a single man to fall,
Was for his great revenge too small:
He therefore in his wrath decreed
For this to make the nation bleed;
And instantly to urge their fate:
A vengeance worthy of his hate!

To bring about his fierce design
He then proceeded to divine,
Then cast the lots without delay,
To fix upon a lucky day:
And with determin'd rage pursues
His wicked and revengeful views.
Then near the throne the monster draws,
And tells the monarch, that his laws

Are

Are interrupted and made void,
Except a people be destroy'd,
That are throughout the empire known,
By laws and customs of their own:
This people are the Jews. The king,
At once consenting to the thing,
Sign'd with his seal the dread command,
Which ever unrevok'd must stand,
That all the Jews his realms contain
Must on a certain day be slain.

Good Mordecai, with anxious mind,
Heard that the dire decree was sign'd:
Loud lamentation makes the chief,
He sackcloth wears to shew his grief;
Near to his heart the nation lies,
And loud and frequent were their cries.
The lovely queen, in her recess,
Soon hears the news of their distress;
And sends her maids the cause to learn,
Who with the answer soon return:

For Mordecai the whole makes known,
And begs she will address the throne.
Perhaps the king may favour give;
And let the injur'd nation live.
The queen from the request withdraws,
Because contrary to the laws:
For whosoe'er in their distress,
Shall to the royal presence press,
And no peculiar favour gain,
Must for the rash attempt be slain.
To this the Jewish chief returns,
While all his heart with anguish burns,
Think not, O queen, the palace walls
Will save thee when thy nation falls!
Rather conclude, that God made
Thee noble, for his people's aid,
That thou may'st needful succour give,
And by thy means his Israel live.
Then fast and pray, the queen replies,
And humbly supplicate the skies.

Three

Three days ſucceſſive. To the king
My much-wrong'd country's cauſe I'll bring,
And ſave her ſons from what's decreed,
Or periſh if I can't ſucceed!
Three days the nation all appears
In ſolemn ſadneſs and in tears;
With humble faſting proſtrate fall,
And on the God of Iſrael call;
Approach his throne with fervent prayer,
And beg he will his people ſpare:
While the young queen, with fervent mind,
Their pious prayers with faſting join'd.
On the third day the beauteous queen
Dreſt in her royal robes was ſeen;
And, bright in blooming charms, the dame
Before the youthful monarch came.
The king, then ſitting on his throne,
Directly made his favour known:
And when he ſaw the fair one ſtand,
Stretch'd out the ſceptre in his hand.

Speak

Speak thy requeſt, O queen! he cry'd:
My conſort cannot ſtand deny'd.
With modeſt ſweetneſs in her eyes,
The queen approach'd, and thus replies:
To-morrow I a feaſt prepare;
Then let the king the banquet ſhare,
With Haman join'd. The king approv'd
The motion of his beſt belov'd;
And to the apartment of the dame,
With Haman to the banquet came:
And there in love the royal gueſt
Enquir'd what was his queen's requeſt:
Let me your majeſty implore
To grace my banquet one day more
With Haman; then I ſhall declare,
Reply'd with ſmiles the royal fair.
With pride the haughty favourite ſwells;
And to his wife and kindred tells,
What high reſpect he late had ſeen,
And how diſtinguiſh'd by the queen.

But as he paſt the palace gate,
Where Mordecai in ſadneſs ſate,
The Jewiſh chief with gloomy frown
Beheld the minion of the crown;
Nor would he the leaſt honour ſhew
To this his country's mortal foe.
This haughty Haman could not bear,
And to his kindred tells his care:
Regard not ſuch a ſlave! they cry;
But make a gallows ſtrong and high:
Report his conduct to the king!
And let the gloomy rebel ſwing!
The lucky thought the ſtateſman prais'd;
The opprobrious timber ſoon was rais'd:
To-morrow e'er 'tis noon, he cries,
The wretch that dare inſult me dies!
The morning ſtar, with ſilver ray,
Peep'd o'er the hills, and promis'd day;
The king long e'er his time awoke,
And to his ſervants thus he ſpoke:

For

For further rest I strive in vain;
Then bring the records of my reign,
And read before me. They proceed;
And in the chronicles they read,
How Mordecai, the honest Jew,
To Ahasuerus ever true,
Discover'd to his royal bride
A plot for which the traitors dy'd.
And what, in haste the king reply'd,
Hath for this virtuous man been done?
Who by his wisdom sav'd the throne.
The servants said, they could not learn
That he had found the least return.
Who stands without? the monarch calls.
Haman, they cry—it lucky falls;
Let him approach! That moment came,
With vengeful spirit all on flame,
The haughty favourite, pale with hate,
To beg the king to urge the fate

Of the uncourtly Mordecai,
And let him on the gallows die.
But e'er he could accuſe the man,
In haſte the monarch thus began:
Haman! one man above the reſt
Deſerves to have my love expreſt!
To honour him I have decreed!
Then tell me how we ſhall proceed!
Haman revolving in his mind
For whom this honour was deſign'd:
Is there a man, his thoughts reply,
The king would honour more than I!
Then on the king he turns his eyes,
And to the queſtion thus replies:
Let royal robes the man adorn,
The ſame your majeſty has worn;
Your crown of gold upon his head;
And let him through the ſtreets be led,
Riding your own high-mettled ſteed;
Let ſome great prince with him proceed,

And through the city thus proclaim,
His rising dignity and name.
Let all behold the man appear!
That nations must henceforth revere!
His honour is the king's delight!
Ye Persians, in his praise unite!—
The worthy man I have in view,
Is honest Mordecai the Jew;
Reply'd the king.—With speed be gone,
And let all this for him be done!
He latent treason scorn'd to hide,
Accus'd by him the traitors dy'd.
Cut to the heart the favourite star'd,
But not to shew his hatred dar'd:
The case admits of no delay;
The king's command he must obey.
So the great object of his hate
He cloath'd in robes of royal state,
And through the city streets proclaim'd
The honours which himself had nam'd.

Then

Then to his houſe proud Haman went
In gloomy care and diſcontent;
And lets his wife and kindred know
The honours which his mortal foe
Had from his hand receiv'd. They all
From this infer the favourite's fall:
And think each ſtratagem will fail,
And never o'er his foes prevail.

While theſe events their wonder claim,
A meſſage to the ſtateſman came:
To attend the king he muſt prepare,
And in queen Eſther's banquet ſhare.
There, ſeated at the royal treat,
He hears the monarch thus repeat
His former claim. Queen Eſther ſay,
What's thy requeſt, without delay:
Clearly to view thy wiſhes bring,
And learn the bounty of a king.—
My life at my petition give!
And let my guiltleſs people live!

Reply'd the queen. A cruel foe
Propoſes by one mighty blow
To cut a nation off! — My fair!
In haſte reply'd the king, who dare
Do this! — The wicked man you ſee,
Rejoin'd the queen, and Haman's he!
In growing wrath the monarch roſe,
And to the palace garden goes.
But ſoon he to the queen returns,
And from her chamberlain he learns,
That Haman, in his envious ſpite,
Had rais'd a gallows vaſt in height,
Whereon he had deſign'd ſhould die
The honeſt Jew, good Mordecai.
Then let himſelf the pleaſure taſte!
And this high honour be his laſt!
Commands the king. The guards attend,
And thus proud Haman found his end.
The day that urg'd the minion's fate,
The monarch heard the queen relate

That Mordecai her kinsman was;
And him he rais'd to Haman's place.
Though due reward the statesman gain'd,
Yet the dire mischief still remain'd.
To death devote the nation lay;
Firm the decree, and fix'd the day.
To turn the impending storm aside,
Queen Esther to the king apply'd.
But the destructive, dire command
Was sign'd, and unrevok'd must stand.
The monarch then, the Jews to save
To all the nation licence gave,
That when the bloody time drew near,
They might in shining arms appear;
Withstand whoe'er against them rose,
And in fair combat meet their foes.
In valour then the Jews proceed,
And all their bold opposers bleed;
Throughout the empire conquest gain,
And twenty thousand men were slain.

Deliver'd

Deliver'd thus they jointly raiſe
High ſtrains of gratitude and praiſe.
One day in ſolemn faſt they join
In memory of the baſe deſign:
Then two in feſtive mirth employ,
And loud and general was the joy.

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

Of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Book of *Ezra* and Book of *Nehemiah throughout.*

THOUGH eighty ſummer ſuns had burn'd,
Since Judah's captive ſons return'd;
And ſixty ſmiling ſprings appear'd
Since they their ſecond temple rear'd;
Yet weak and feeble they remain'd,
And heathen cuſtoms on them gain'd:

Their

Their city wall in ruin lies,
No ſtately towers or ramparts riſe:
In native Hebrew, they adore
The GOD of Iſrael now no more:
The Chaldeans tongue alone prevails;
Their zeal for GOD's true worſhip fails;
The people from his rites withdraw;
Nor can their rulers read his law:
Its precepts and its threats forgot,
The feeble nation knew it not.
Ally'd to all the nations round,
Strange wives, and heathen rites abound.
A mongrel tongue their children ſpeak;
Poor are their prieſts, their warriors weak.
Six years had Ahaſuerus reign'd,
When Ezra a commiſſion gain'd,
To feeble Zion to repair,
And rectify abuſes there.
This chief, well ſkill'd in things divine,
From the high prieſt deriv'd his line,

That

That by the raging ſword had dy'd,
When the firſt temple was deſtroy'd.
In learning's ſpacious field approv'd,
And by his nation well belov'd,
Laden with gifts, and high in fame,
To Zion's broken walls he came.
With Ezra in the journey join'd
A numerous train, whoſe willing mind
A ſecret, ardent longing felt,
To ſee where their forefathers dwelt.

The chief his orders from the throne
Made to the king's lieutenants known:
Then in his government he ſate,
And ſettled both the church and ſtate
According to the ancient law.
The trembling nation heard with awe
The precepts which the book contain'd,
Now in the Chaldean * tongue explain'd.

Then

* Ezra with great care collected the ſacred writings which had been ſcattered about, and almoſt loſt during

Then from the land good Ezra drives
The numerous train of heathen wives
The Jews had taken; and in tears
For this offence the land appears.
The wives and children they had born
Depart, and must no more return.

The ruler then with holy dread
Commands the scriptures to be read:
Collects the holy books with care,
And settles every great affair,
With honour and with high applause,
By Israel's long neglected laws.

When Ezra fifteen years had sway'd,
Another governor was made:
And from the Persian throne he came;
Great Nehemiah was his name.

the captivity, and translated the law and the prophets into the Chalder language; the knowledge of the ancient Hebrew being almost lost, during the seventy years the Jews remained in Babylon.

Though better times the nation ſaw
Since they were govern'd by the law;
Yet much contempt on Zion falls,
While low in ruin lie her walls;
And burnt her numerous gates appear'd,
Which all this time had not been rear'd.
  Theſe evils at the Perſian throne
Were made to Nehemiah known.
The news ſome of his nation bring,
As he attended on the king.
Deep anguiſh labour'd in his breaſt,
Which plainly by his look's expreſs'd;
When near with royal wine he draws,
The king obſerv'd, and aſk'd the cauſe:
The chief declares. The king appears
Affected with his ſervant's tears,
And him with full commiſſion ſends
To his poor brethren, and his friends,
To build their walls, their gates to rear,
And make Jeruſalem appear

Worthy respect. Without delay
The worthy man pursu'd his way.
He soon a great assembly calls;
And to rebuild the city walls
The whole assembled nation tries;
And from the rubbish now they rise.
But Israel's old inveterate foes,
With all their might the work oppose:
By various arts disturb the peace,
And seek to make the building cease.
The noble chief, with honest views,
Determin'd the great work pursues.
Him, zealous in his country's cause,
No flattery moves, no threatning awes.
The willing nation he divides,
Which vast, incessant toil abides;
One party on the work attends;
Another from the foe defends;
And the industrious builders stand
Each with his weapon in his hand.

Successful on the building goes,
And soon vast walls the town inclose.
With shouts of joy, and songs of praise,
At last the massy gates they raise:
And a great day of sacrifice
Proclaims the nation's ardent joys.
Ten years the governor remain'd,
And all his people's favour gain'd.
With pious Ezra he unites
To fix religion's sacred rites.
And synagogues through all the land
The governor and priest ordain'd;
That all the tribes, with solemn awe,
Might hear the prophets and the law.
In every case the nation's friend,
The chief would every care attend;
And having settled their affairs,
He to the Persian court repairs.
Five years good Nehemiah stay'd,
And then, to lend his country aid,

He

He to his government return'd:
When ſoon with great concern he learn'd,
That in his abſence from the land
The heathens had advantage gain'd,
And that the temple was prophan'd:
For Ammonitiſh goods were ſtor'd
Within the dwelling of the LORD;
And through the land ſtrange wives abound,
Fetch'd from the heathen nations round.
His anger riſing at the view,
The goods he from the temple threw,
And then oblig'd without delay
The tribes to put their wives away;
Or from the land they muſt depart.

The high prieſt's ſon, whoſe eaſy heart
Had been by female charms inſnar'd,
To Judah's daughters had preferr'd,
And to his bed advanc'd a dame
That from Samaria's mountain came,

The

The daughter of the prince. The priest
For this offence the chief dismiss'd
From Israel's land. His spouse's sire,
In whom both pride and rage conspire,
Gains licence from the Persian throne,
To build a temple of his own;
And in the priesthood fix'd his son.
Then a vast pile appears in sight
On Gerizim's exalted height;
At a vast distance seen to rise,
The same in structure and in size
As that which on mount Zion stands,
And all Jerusalem commands.
Mannasseh the high priesthood gains,
And soon against the Jews maintains,
That here's the place where Israel's God
Design'd to fix his last abode.
To the true God they altars raise,
The incense smokes, the victims blaze;

And

And each religious rite remain'd
As Moſes in the law ordain'd.
But as the temple they oppoſe,
Soon an inveterate hatred roſe
Between the nations. Various Jews,
Whom vengeance for their crimes purſues,
At fair Samaria's hill appear,
And ſhun the arm of juſtice there.
A mongrel people hence proceeds;
And an increaſing envy breeds
Through a long courſe of circling years,
And hate in various forms appears.

HISTORY THE NINTH.

The Old and New Testament connected, by a brief Sketch of the State of the Jewish Nation, from the Death of Nehemiah, to the Birth of Christ. Including a Period of about 400 Years.

WHILE various kings o'er Persia reign'd,
The Jewish church and state remain'd
As fix'd by Nehemiah's care;
And to Jerusalem repair
The tribes to worship. But the law
Was weekly read, with solemn awe,
Throughout the land, that all might hear,
And the great God of Israel fear:
To the high priest belong'd the sway;
And him the willing tribes obey
In sacred and in civil things;
And hence dissention often springs:

The

The eldest son of Aaron's race
Not always could obtain the place:
The Persian kings, whene'er they chose,
Presum'd the high priest to depose,
And raise another. For this cause
His vengeful sword Johanan draws,
When his young brother durst rebel;
And Jeshua in the temple fell.

Supreme o'er all the world appears
The Persian throne for ninety years.
Then, fierce as a devouring flame,
The mighty Macedonian came;
And as a bolt of thunder flies,
On burning wheels along the skies,
Resistless raging from afar
Amongst the nations drives his war.
On Persia first his force he bends,
Darius falls, † his empire ends.

† There were five kings reigned in Persia, from Artaxerxes Longimanus, who was the Ahasuheres of the scrip-

The vanquiſh'd world before him flies,
Whoever dare withſtand him dies.
When ſea-girt Tyrus, with her walls,
Before the mighty conqueror falls;
His ſwelling heart with anger burns,
And on the Jews his war he turns;
Becauſe, before the town he gain'd,
To ſend him aid they had diſdain'd.
The anger of the dreadful chief
Fill'd all Jeruſalem with grief:
When, by a viſion warn'd, the prieſt,
In all his holy garments dreſs'd,
Goes forth with a religious band,
And they to meet the conqueror ſtand;
The prieſts and levites all unite,
In long proceſſion dreſs'd in white.

The

tures, to the deſtruction of the Perſian empire by Alexander the Great: 1. Darius Nothus; 2. Artaxerxes Mnemon; 3. Ochus; 4. Arogus; 5. Darius Codomannus.

The king, when the high priest he saw,
Stood deep impress'd with sacred awe;
He venerates the holy man,
And eager to embrace him ran.
For this same man in glory bright
In vision stood before his sight,
Before his troops on Persia fall,
And told him, he should conquer all.
The monarch lays his weapons down,
And enters, as a friend, the town;
Each kingly favour which they want
He freely condescends to grant;
To Israel's God in sacrifice
His grateful adorations rise;
And when the costly offerings cease,
He from the land departs in peace.
In early youth the conqueror dy'd.
His generals then the world divide;
And Israel's subject land remain'd
The lot of him who Egypt gain'd.

Three kings* in Egypt held the sway;
And them in peace the Jews obey
One hundred years. A fourth† arose,
Which all the offended priests oppose;
But urge the law of God in vain,
When he the temple would profane.
The king persists: but, smote by heaven,
He from the holy place was driven,
And soon in rage departs the land.
But as they durst his will withstand,
The raging king his wrath pursues
On his defenceless subject Jews
That dwell in Egypt, and refuse
To serve his gods. These brought in chains
His place of public shews contains.
The gloomy tyrant swells with pride,
And orders them to be destroy'd

By

* 1. Ptolomy Soter; 2. Ptolomy Philadelpus; 3. Ptolomy Euergetes.

† Ptolomy Philopater.

By elephants. His will proclaim
The heralds; and the city came
To ſee the ſhew. Amongſt the reſt
The king appears. Each mighty beaſt,
To favour the unjuſt deſign,
Made drunk with frankincenſe and wine,
But with blind rage each monſter flies
On thoſe who came to feaſt their eyes
With blood and carnage. All around
They pale in death o'erſpread the ground;
And ſlaughter was the ſport they found.
The Jews eſcape. Strange ſights appear
Amongſt the ſtars, and fill with fear
The cruel king, who then gives o'er,
And ſeeks to vex the Jews no more.
O'er Egypt then an * infant reigns;
And Syria's mighty † monarch gains

The

* Ptolomy Epiphanes, an infant of five years old.

† Antiochus the Great.

The land of Judah; and his ſway
In peace the ſubject Jews obey;
Their daily ſacrifice prepare,
And by the law their conduct ſquare.
In peace they dwelt for thirty years,
And then a cruel king † appears,
Whoſe ſavage heart with hatred burns,
And God's high worſhip overturns.
Full of impiety and pride,
The God of Iſrael he defy'd;
Reſolv'd to make his worſhip ceaſe,
And ſet up all the gods of Greece.
With this unjuſt and cruel aim
His army ſoon to Zion came;
And, by the tyrant's ſtern command,
Spread blood and ſlaughter o'er the land.
The prieſts they from their altars drove,
Each pure religious rite remove,
And incenſe burn to Grecian Jove;

Whoſe

† Antiochus Epiphanes.

Whoſe ſtatues in the temple riſe;
And there a ſow they ſacrifice.
Then every one that durſt abide
True to the law of Moſes dy'd.
In every city of the land,
The cruel king the Jews conſtrain'd
To worſhip idols, and to eat
Unclean abominable meat.
The king, in wantonneſs of rage,
No ſtation ſpares, or ſex, or age;
The learn'd, the reverend, hoary head,
Diſhonour'd joins the vulgar dead.
While by fierce tortures, racks, and fire,
A mother and ſeven ſons expire.
The king, with ſwelling rage and pride,
All copies of GOD's law deſtroy'd:
And, the weak nation thus oppreſs'd,
The daily ſacrifices ceas'd;
The prieſts all from the temple fled,
And graſs and weeds the courts o'erſpread.

An aged priest * at Modin dwelt,
Who holy indignation felt
Rise in his heart, when in his view
A cowardly, apostate Jew
To gain the tyrant's favour sought,
And to his idols offerings brought.
Swift to the altar press'd the fire,
And quench'd the base, unhallow'd fire:
Zealous for God his sword he drew,
And the vile sacrificer slew.
Four valiant sons with him proceed,
And all the friends of idols bleed.
And when the train beheld them dead,
They all into the desert fled.
Here by their pious brethren join'd,
They with united zealous mind,
And fearless heart, to combat rose:
They dare the king's command oppose,
And face their country's cruel foes.

Where'er

* Mattathias, the father of the Maccabees.

Where'er their valiant parties ſpread,
They laid the king's lieutenants dead;
O'erturn'd their altars, and reſtor'd
The ſacred worſhip of the LORD.
When the renowned hero dy'd,
His valiant ſon his place ſupply'd.
Brave Judas then to war proceeds,
And boldly dares immortal deeds:
With a ſmall troop he fearleſs goes,
And mighty armies overthrows;
Rages around: on hills or vales
Alike his conquering ſword prevails.
Then Judah's ſtreams ran blood, and all
Who dare oppoſe brave Judas fall.
To Zion then, with boundleſs joys,
The conqueror and his army riſe:
They cleanſe the temple, purge the floor,
And God's true worſhip there reſtore:
The incenſe ſmokes, the victims blaze,
And great JEHOVAH's name they praiſe.

When the proud tyrant heard the news,
He vow'd revenge on all the Jews:
But on himſelf the vengeance falls,
And on his gods in vain he calls;
For Heaven chaſtis'd his daring pride:
He in vaſt pain and horror dy'd.

Five years the Jews the war maintain,
Then Judas was in battle ſlain.
His brother Jonathan ſucceeds,
And emulates his brother's deeds.
Near twenty years this chief remain'd,
He various mighty battles gain'd;
And both the church and ſtate maintain'd.
By treachery at laſt he bled,
And Simon govern'd in his ſtead,
His valiant brother. Full ſeven years
He at the army's head appears:
The Jewiſh freedom he regain'd,
And o'er a willing people reign'd;

Till baſely murder'd, * he his throne
Left to his wiſe and valiant ſon.

Now vex'd by fierce contending kings,
Perpetual war in Syria ſprings;
While thirty years Hyrcanus ſway'd,
And ſome important conqueſts made.
Victorious o'er his country's foes,
In martial glory high he roſe:
His war againſt Samaria burns,
And he their temple overturns,
And lays in ruins. From him ſprings
A noble line of Jewiſh † kings,

* Simon was treacherouſly murdered at Jericho by Ptolomy his ſon-in-law, who, thinking to ſeize the government, murdered his father-in-law and two of his ſons at a banquet. John Hyrcanus, another of his ſons, ſucceeded his father.

† The ſovereigns of the Aſmonæan family, that reigned in Judea from the death of Hyrcanus the ſon of Simon Maccabeus, were, 1. Ariſtobulus; 2. Alexander-Jannaus; 3. Alexandra; 4. Ariſtobolus; 5. Hyrcanus; and 6. Antigonus.

Which ſeventy years the throne ſupply'd,
Till Herod all the race deſtroy'd.
Twice thirteen years before the day
That Herod roſe to ſovereign ſway,
The Roman general Pompey gain'd
The towers of Zion, and prophan'd
The holy temple. Herod roſe,
Though all the Jews his troops oppoſe:
By bribes at Rome his cauſe prevail'd,
Or elſe his utmoſt force had fail'd.
The Roman legions took the field,
Jeruſalem was forc'd to yield
To power ſuperior, and to own
A foreigner on Judah's throne.
Of Edom's race the tyrant came;
In war high honours were his claim.
He rais'd his throne, and long it ſtood
On murder, treachery, and blood:
He three and thirty years had reign'd,
And every vice his throne had ſtain'd;
When

When God from his eternal throne
Sent down his well-beloved Son,
And, human nature to adorn,
At Bethlehem the babe was born.

[The Author thinks it incumbent upon him to acknowledge, that he hath received considerable assistance in this part of the work from Prideaux's Connexion of the Old and New Testament.]

HISTORY THE TENTH.

Of the Patriarch JOB. *

Book of Job *throughout.*

FAR in the eaſt, in rural ſtate,
Dwelt wealthy Job, obſcurely great;
True to the GOD that rules the ſkies,
Each day his grateful offerings riſe:
Juſtice and truth upheld his throne,
And every virtue was his own:
The father of mankind he ſtood,
And ſpent his days in doing good.
Like other princes of his day,
His ſubſtance in his cattle lay.

Vaſt

* It is ſuppoſed, that the Patriarch Job lived in the time between Abraham and Moſes: But as his Hiſtory hath no connexion with the Hiſtory of the family of Abraham, and it ſtanding in the Sacred Canon after the laſt Hiſtory in the Old Teſtament, it was thought proper to introduce it here.

Vaſt were his lowing herds; and wide
His ſheep ſpread o'er the mountain ſide:
Three thouſand camels ready ſtand
To bear his burdens o'er the land:
With theſe five hundred aſſes join'd,
All to his ſervants care aſſign'd.
Seven blooming ſons amongſt them ſhare
His high paternal love and care,
With three fair daughters; and remain
The pride and pleaſure of his reign.
In feſtive mirth they ſpent their time:
The good man (leſt ſome ſecret crime
Should ſtain their ſouls) with pious care,
And daily ſacrifice and prayer,
An offering makes for each apart,
With all the father in his heart.
With approbation from on high,
The mighty Ruler of the ſky
The conduct of the chief ſurveys,
And ſpeaks his well deſerved praiſe.

Amongſt

Amongſt the bleſs'd high pleaſure ſprings,
And heaven with loud applauſes rings.
As through the ſkies his praiſes ran,
The envious foe of GOD and man
Approach'd the high eternal throne;
And made his ſly ſuſpicions known.
He urg'd, that Job, in proſperous days,
Might ſpend his time in love and praiſe;
But ſhould the LORD his hand reverſe,
He would his benefactor curſe.
To this the Eternal GOD reply'd,
Then let the cauſe be fairly try'd:
His ſubſtance lies at thy command,
But on himſelf lay not thine hand.
The eldeſt ſon a feaſt prepar'd,
And all the reſt the banquet ſhar'd;
When to promote their higheſt good,
The parent by his altar ſtood.
To him, in haſte, a ſervant ran,
And wildly ſtaring thus began:

This

This day, my lord, at thy command
The oxen plow'd the furrow'd land;
The asses graz'd close by their side;
But suddenly we were annoy'd
By a vast troop of armed men,
That Sabeans seem'd. The cattle then
They having seiz'd, with fury fall
On thy defenceless servants. All
Lie cold in death on yonder plain;
To tell thee only I remain.
Scarce had he ceas'd, when to the chief
Another came, oppress'd with grief:
This day ere noon, my lord, he cries,
The lightning flash'd along the skies;
Vast rolling sheets of sulph'rous flame
Amongst the sheep directly came;
The flashing fire thy flocks destroy'd,
And with the sheep the shepherds dy'd:
I only have escap'd. A third
Approaches ere he spoke the word:

This day, he cry'd, the camels ſpread
Wide o'er the land; and as they fed,
Three troops of Chaldeans came in view;
Thy ſervants with the ſword they ſlew,
And ſeiz'd the cattle. While he ſpoke
A fourth approach'd: An awful ſtroke,
My lord, hath happen'd, ſoon he ſaid,
And laid thy ſons and daughters dead:
For as in chearful feaſt they join,
And quaff'd with joy the roſy wine,
A whirlwind from the deſert roſe,
And wrapt in clouds of duſt it goes
Directly to the palace walls,
And the whole ſtructure crashing falls;
The bodies in the ruins lie;
And not one ſoul eſcap'd but I.

The hoary ſire his mantle tears,
And inſtant ſhaves his ſilver hairs;
But ſtill the dreadful ſhock he bears

Worthy

Worthy himſelf; no weakneſs ſhews;
But ſtands majeſtic in his woes,
Then proſtrate on the ground he falls,
And on the great Creator calls.
Eternal God! he calmly cries,
Right are thy ways! thy heart is wiſe!
Juſtly thou takeſt all I have:
I yield it to the hand that gave!
Naked I was of woman born,
And naked ſhall to earth return:
Thy glory ſtill my lips proclaim!
I will adore and bleſs thy name!

With full delight the Lord ſurveys
His calm ſubmiſſion, and his praiſe;
And from his high eternal throne
Thus makes his approbation known:
How long, ye fiends! with helliſh ſpite
Will ye in fraud and lies delight!
To ſtrike you dumb! let all his foes
See yon good man ſupport his woes!

Trace with ſurprize his conduct o'er,
And dare accuſe my ſaints no more!
Then near the throne ſly Satan draws:
Ye Heavens! he cries, is there not cauſe
For Job's ſubmiſſion! in your eye
How many hapleſs wretches lie
With ſickneſs and with pain oppreſs'd,
Whoſe goading anguiſh finds no reſt!
His troubles Job unmov'd ſuſtains,
While he in florid health remains!
But if his bone and fleſh you touch,
He ſoon will cry, it is too much!
And like the vileſt of his race,
Ye Gods! he'll curſe you to your face!
Satan ſoon hears the LORD reply,
In this my ſervant you may try;
But ſpare his life. The crafty fiend,
Thus having the commiſſion gain'd,
Smites the good man with ſore diſeaſe,
And low in duſt his glory lays.

Now with foul ulcers cover'd o'er,
He lies neglected on the floor:
In huge affliction and dismay,
The scorn of all mankind he lay;
The beggar and the vagabond
Spar'd not their prince to spit upon;
With bold derision round him press'd,
And made his miseries their jest.
But one more plague was still behind,
Which to the rest the dæmon join'd:
The good man's wife his rage inspires,
He fills her soul with hellish fires;
And, to augment each daring wrong,
He on the patriarch plays her tongue:
In rattling tone she silence broke,
And full of pride and scorn thus spoke:
Where are your prayers and offerings now!
Go, abject wretch! and pay your vow:
Worship the GOD who with a frown
Showers all his plagues and curses down!

But

But rather in his face I'd fly,
I if I curs'd him could but die!
Check the bold thought! the ſire replies;
How rarely is a woman wiſe!
The counſels of the eternal throne
To us imperfectly are known:
And though our cup with woes he fill,
God may be good and gracious ſtill.

The rumour of the good man's woes
Soon to the neighbouring nations goes:
Three well known princes then attend,
To comfort their eſteemed friend.
With vaſt amazement and ſurprize
They all behold him where he lies;
So full of miſery, alas!
And alter'd from what late he was,
They know him not. When nearer view
Convinc'd them that the whole was true,
Each his rich mantle rent, then ſpread
Dry aſhes o'er his princely head,

And

And in deep ſorrow and amaze
Sat down aſtoniſh'd full ſeven days.
Then Job the awful ſilence broke;
He in the depth of anguiſh ſpoke,
And in the moſt pathetic ſtrains
Of his prodigious woes complains.
To him each friend in turn replies,
And ſeeks to vindicate the ſkies,
By urging that his fall proceeds
From ſome conceal'd atrocious deeds
That ſtain'd his ſoul. In bolder ſtrain
Job will his innocence maintain;
And to the Heavens appeals. The God
Who ſhakes creation with his nod,
Deſcends to earth in clouds and ſtorms,
And darkneſs his pavillion forms:
His voice out of the whirlwind broke,
And 'midſt ſurrounding thunders ſpoke
The wiſdom of his mighty plan.
How great is God! how abject man!

When

When more of GOD the patriarch saw,
And the perfection of his law,
The holy man was fill'd with awe;
Confess'd his various vileness o'er,
And will maintain his works no more.
With tender heart the LORD forgives;
Satan departs; the patriarch lives:
And GOD, who now approv'd his way,
Shone on the evening of his day;
Built up his house; his wealth increas'd;
With numerous sons and daughters bless'd;
His strong old age with good supply'd,
And he in peace and honour dy'd.

THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK IX.

FROM THE

Birth to the Death of CHRIST:

CONTAINING

The Transactions of about 33 Years.

HISTORY THE FIRST.

The Birth of John the Baptist, the Forerunner of the Messiah.

Luke, ch. i.

THE long appointed time drew nigh,
Fix'd in the counsels of the sky,
For Heaven to bless this guilty earth
With the Almighty Saviour's birth.
Before old time began his flight,
While chaos reign'd and ancient night,
Where roll the beauteous worlds of light;
High in the heavens his throne he rear'd,
By all the angelic hosts rever'd;
With his Eternal Father liv'd;
A name above all names receiv'd;
And stood the darling of the skies,
While boundless heights his glories rise.

But poor, loſt, ſinful man to ſave;
Grim death to conquer and the grave;
Heaven's riſing wrath to pacify;
And for our guilty race to die;
From hell's wide jaws to ſnatch the prey;
And chaſe her gloomy king away;
He laid aſide his ſtarry crown,
And cloath'd in human fleſh came down.

By each prophetic bard foretold,
His day the nation would behold;
And from a ſpotleſs virgin's womb
Expects to ſee Meſſiah come.
But, ere the prince the land adorn,
His great forerunner muſt be born.

When Herod thirty years had reign'd,
And had his hated crown maintain'd
By vice and cruelty: (but now
It ſat uneaſy on his brow;
And various troubles round him roſe,
Which gave the tyrant no repoſe)

There

There was a priest of blameless life,
Nam'd Zacharias; and his wife
Elizabeth: From Aaron's seed
Alike the pious pair proceed:
Of Israel's God they stood in awe,
His temple lov'd, and kept his law:
Yet had this virtuous happy pair
Liv'd to old age without an heir.
As he attended, in his turn,
To make the smoking incense burn,
The fire he on the altar laid,
The people at a distance pray'd;
The cloud arose; and on the right
An heavenly form appear'd in sight.
The priest, with fear and wild amaze,
Retreated from the beamy blaze:
When instantly the angel cries,
O pious priest! all fear despise;
Thou art the favourite of the skies;

And

And God, propitious to thy prayer,
Will cauſe thy aged wife to bear.
John ſhalt thou call thy infant ſon,
And gladneſs thro' thy houſe ſhall run:
God's Spirit on the youth ſhall reſt;
And, with peculiar favour bleſt,
With glowing zeal his heart ſhall burn,
And many he to God ſhall turn.
The God whoſe preſence Iſrael waits,
Deſcends from heaven's eternal gates!
He comes! He comes without delay!
The prophet ſhall prepare his way.
To this the wondering prieſt replies:
Give me ſome token from the ſkies,
That it ſhall be as thou haſt told;
For both my wife and I are old.
The angel with a frown return'd,
(While ſtill his glory brighter burn'd,)
To chaſe thy ſcruples, be it known,
I ſtand before the eternal throne;

Gabriel

Gabriel my name in heaven. Should I,
Doſt thou ſuppoſe, come here to lie!
No more indulge thy doubt; be dumb
Till the appointed time ſhall come!

The heavenly power, thus having ſpoke,
Aſcending in the incenſe' ſmoke,
Vaniſh'd from ſight. The prieſt, afraid,
Aſtoniſh'd by the altar ſtay'd.
The fragrant incenſe ceas'd to burn;
The people wait for his return;
And numbers ſeek the cauſe to learn.
To them he beckon'd with his hand;
No power of ſpeech he can command.
When to his houſe he ſoon withdraws,
And leaves them wondering at the cauſe.

Soon the predicted bleſſing came;
And pregnant grew the joyful dame.
When in due time a ſon ſhe bore,
The father then was dumb no more.

Loud ſtrains of joy, and ſongs of praiſe,
The whole affected houſhold raiſe.
John was the name he gave the boy,
Who ſtood his parents' pride and joy:
Strong grew the youth, and much his mind
To contemplation was inclin'd:
In the lone deſert he abode,
Till he came forth to ſpeak for God.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

The Angel Gabriel appears to the Virgin Mary, and foretells the Conception and Birth of Chriſt.

Luke, ch. i.

AND now, commiſſion'd from the ſkies,
To Judah's plains great Gabriel flies:
Juſt at the opening verge of day
To Nazareth he wing'd his way:

On

On Heli's houſe his glory falls,
And ſhines upon the humble walls.
One virgin daughter bleſs'd the ſire,
Whom all the neighbouring youth admire,
For every maiden virtue known,
And paſt compare her beauty ſhone.
Joſeph to her had paid his vows,
And his addreſs the fair allows.

Bright as the burning beams of day,
With garments white and pure as they,
The angel came where Mary lay;
With his ſoft touch awoke the maid,
He ſmil'd around, and thus he ſaid:
Fair virgin, hail! in favour high
With the great monarch of the ſky:
Heaven's choiceſt bleſſings on thee reſt;
Thou more than all thy ſex art bleſs'd.
Dazzled with heavenly glory bright,
The virgin ſcarce could bear the ſight.

With milder beams the angel ſhines,
And to the wondering fair rejoins:
Let no chill fear thy thoughts confound,
For, Mary, thou haſt favour found;
Favour with GOD, and born of thee
His Iſrael ſhall their Saviour ſee.
A ſon thou ſhalt conceive and bear,
To David's houſe he ſhall be heir.
The name of JESUS ſhall be given
To the young child, the heir of heaven:
His father's throne he ſhall aſcend,
And of his kingdom be no end.
How can it be! the maid reply'd:
'Tis known I am not yet a bride;
And ſtill remain unſtain'd, and pure.—
The great prediction yet is ſure:
For the Supreme Eternal Mind
Is not to common means confin'd,
Reply'd the angel: Thou, this hour
Made pregnant by his mighty power,

Shalt in due time MESSIAH bear:
The Son of GOD ſhall be thy care;
The heir of Heaven ſhall ſuck thy breaſt,
And wondering nations hail thee bleſt!
But if a token thou require,
To Zacharias' houſe retire,
And the increaſing joy attend
Of thy dear relative and friend;
Barren no more, but pregnant now,
Six months are paſt. I ſcarce know how
To bear my joy, reply'd the maid:
Lord, let it be as thou haſt ſaid!
The virgin then, without delay,
O'er Judah's mountains took her way,
When to her kinſman's houſe ſhe came,
And ſaw with joy the pregnant dame,
They both unite to praiſe the LORD,
And reſt depending on his word.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

The Birth of Christ, and the immediate Circumstances that attended it.

Luke, ch. ii.

NOW by the Spirit of the LORD,
According to his heavenly word,
The spotless virgin pregnant grows;
And soon the sacred burden shews.
Of this her lover Joseph heard,
And the good man in grief appear'd.
He had espous'd the holy maid;
Some time the nuptials were delay'd:
But now the happy time was come
He thought to take the fair one home.
At her dishonour much he griev'd,
A fault which could not be retriev'd:
But pity urg'd him yet to spare
The false and violated fair,

As

As he concludes her. Forc'd to part,
He ſtrives to tear her from his heart:
Yet her diſhonour will not ſpread;
But fears to take her to his bed.

While the good man had thus decreed,
But doubted how he ſhould proceed;
By night a viſion on him ſhone,
And thus the LORD his will made known:
No longer, Joſeph, be afraid,
But to thy boſom take the maid,
Unſtain'd and pure as virgin ſnows:
The ſacred burden, which ſhe ſhews,
From Heaven proceeds. A ſon ſhe'll bear,
To David's houſe he ſhall be heir:
And JESUS thou his name ſhalt call;
The prince of heaven, the LORD of all:
And when his father's throne he wins,
He'll ſave his people from their ſins.
The good man wakes with glad ſurprize;
Near to his heart the virgin lies:

Then

Then ſoon her huſband's houſe ſhe gains,
But he from nuptial joys abſtains
Till her appointed time was run,
And ſhe brought forth her heavenly ſon.

Now mighty Rome's imperial ſway
The nations of the world obey.
Auguſtus had the ſceptre gain'd;
And he in peace and glory reign'd:
When through the various conquer'd lands
The monarch's high decree * commands,
In every town a ſtrict ſurvey,
That all may lawful tribute pay.

As

* This decree was paſſed at Rome three years before the birth of Chriſt. So much time was taken in carrying it through the other provinces of the empire, a regiſter was now made in the ſeveral cities of Judea: but no taxes were paid to the Romans till twelve years after this time, when Archelaus, the ſon of Herod, was put down from his government for his injuſtice and other crimes, and Judea was formed into a Roman province.

As Joſeph and his virgin bride
To David's houſe were both ally'd,
On this occaſion they went down
To Bethlehem, the ancient town
From which the royal ſeat aroſe;
Where a great crowd of people goes:
And as the monarch gave command,
They regiſter'd in order ſtand.

The time arriv'd when they were there,
Which all the fair when pregnant fear:
No room could any inn afford
For heaven's high King, creation's LORD,
Now to be born. The holy maid
Was in an homely ſtable laid,
Now her appointed time was run,
And there brought forth her heavenly ſon.*

But though the earth no honour gave
To heaven's great Prince, who came to ſave;

His

* It is generally allowed by chronologers, that Chriſt was born four years before the vulgar æra.

His happy birth the angels ſing,
And joyful hail the new-born King.
Now night her ſable mantle threw,
And Judah's hills had hid from view;
When on the neighbouring mountain ſide
The ſhepherds all the night abide
Attentive to their fleecy care,
And ſcorn the chains of ſleep to wear:
In midnight gloom the mountains lie,
Huſh'd were the winds, and clear the ſky;
When ſudden on their wondering ſight
Darted a blaze of heavenly light:
An angel form the ſhepherds ſaw,
And ſhook around with trembling awe;
When ſoon deſcends, on a bright cloud,
The heavenly youth, and cries aloud:
Baniſh your fears, ye favour'd ſwains!
Let gladneſs reign through Judah's plains!
Glad tidings from the ſkies we bring!
Let Zion hail her new-born King!

At

At Bethlehem, this happy morn,
The long-predicted babe is born.
There the young prince, ordain'd to rise,
The Saviour sent you from the skies,
Now in a humble manger lies.
While thus he spake, a flood of light
Immediate burst upon the sight,
And through the concave of the sky
Vast crowds of burning seraphs fly;
All heaven descends to earthly plains;
And thus were heard their sacred strains:
Glory to GOD, ye seraphs, raise!
Let every harp resound his praise!
How bright in heaven his goodness shines!
How wonderful are his designs!
Let all the skies adore his plan
Of love and peace to fallen man!
Thus having sang, the heavenly train
The summit of the sky regain:

And when the morn restor'd the day,
The wondering shepherds take their way
To Bethlehem, with anxious mind,
And there the holy babe they find
New born, and in a manger laid,
Directly as the angel said.
The virgin mother wondering heard
How Heaven had in her cause appear'd;
And while their tale the shepherds told,
With wonder all the babe behold.
Then while their hearts with rapture burn'd,
To their own flocks the swains return'd;
Loud strains of praise their lips proclaim,
And great MESSIAH was their theme.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

Christ presented in the Temple.

Luke, ch. ii.

THE eighth glad morn was seen to rise;
The holy babe they circumcise;
JESUS the wonderous child was nam'd,
As e'er his birth by Heaven proclaim'd.
And when the moon her round fulfill'd,
They to the temple take the child;
There with her infant in her hands
The virgin by the altar stands;
And, as the law commands it done,
Presents her offering and her son:
When with his spirit all on flame,
Amongst the crowd old Simeon came;
Who, highly favour'd by the sky,
The LORD had shewn he should not die

Before the Saviour he beheld:
And now by heavenly power impell'd,
His aged arms the infant take,
And loud exulting thus he ſpake:
LORD, 'tis enough! now let me die!
And join the praiſes of the ſky.
True to thy promiſe thou haſt been!
I have thy great ſalvation ſeen!
And thou, bleſs'd babe, ordain'd to riſe
Bright as a ſtar that decks the ſkies,
O'er heathen lands ſhalt ſhine confeſs'd,
And Iſrael ſhall in thee be bleſs'd.
While in the lofty temple ſtay'd
The infant, and the holy maid,
With eager ſteps, and ardent mind,
The general joy a matron join'd,
Who always to the temple came;
And pious Anna was her name:
A propheteſs advanc'd in age;
And ſhe, inſpir'd with holy rage,

The

The mother and the child ſurveys
With loudeſt ſtrains of lofty praiſe.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

The Offerings of the Eaſtern Sages: The Murder of the Innocents: The Departure of the Holy Family to Egypt, and their Return.

Matt. ch. ii.

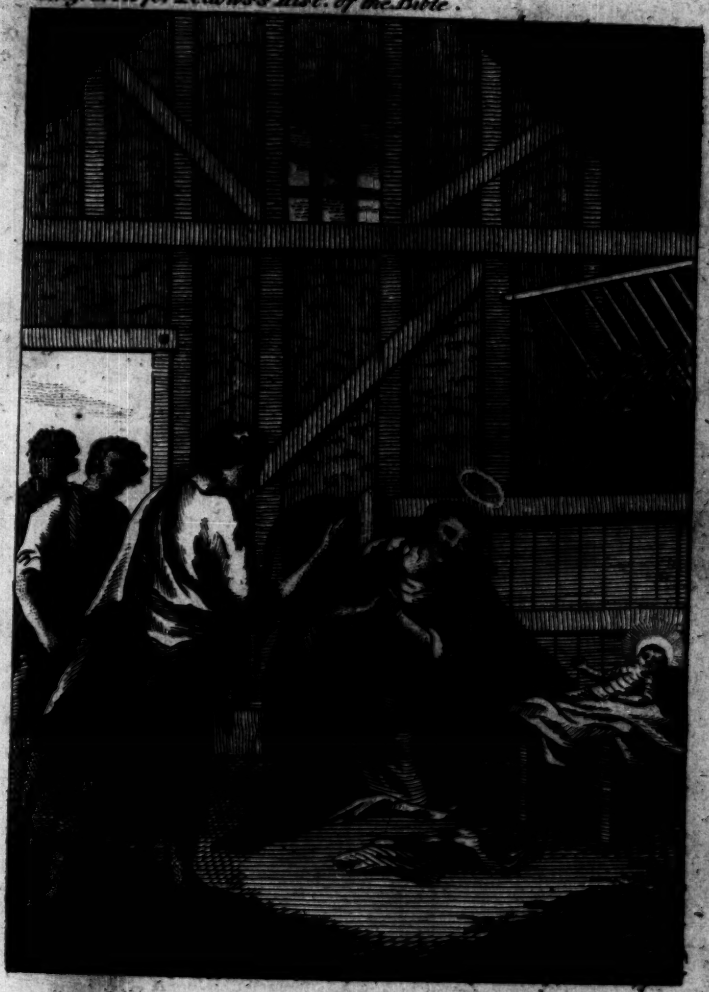
CONſpicuous in the eaſtern ſkies,
While a long train of glories riſe,
A ſtar, like that which gilds the morn,
Proclaims the great MESSIAH born:
And ſoon a learned train repairs,
That read the language of the ſtars,
To Salem's towers; and offerings bring,
Wiſhing to find the new-born king.
To Herod's court they all repair,
And make the great enquiry there:

Our pious zeal, they cry, purſues
A mighty king born to the Jews;
In our own country from afar
With joy we have beheld his ſtar,
And come to worſhip: tell us where
The royal babe is to appear.
Alarm'd the gloomy tyrant heard,
And for his falling crown he fear'd.
Grown old in murder and in blood,
His tottering throne but feebly ſtood;
One faithful friend he did not know,
But counted every man his foe;
And in his wicked heart decreed
This babe, where'er he was, to bleed;
But hides his baſe deſign with care,
And ſpeaks the eaſtern ſages fair.
To the Sanhedrim * he applies,
To ſearch the ancient prophecies,

And

* The great counſel of the Jews, conſiſting of 70 perſons of the chief prieſt, elders, and learned men.

Engraved for Fellows's Hist. of the Bible.



The Birth of Christ.

And give the certain knowledge where
The great MESSIAH ſhould appear.
At Bethlehem, they all reply;
Such is the language of the ſky,
By prophets taught. The monarch then
Sends the enquiring learned men,
Deſiring, if their queſt ſucceed,
They to his court will ſend with ſpeed;
For if he once the child could view,
With pious zeal he'd worſhip too.
The eaſtern chiefs without delay
To Bethlehem purſue their way.
Immediate brightening all the ſkies,
The glorious ſtar * was ſeen to riſe;
And leads the much rejoicing train
Over each hill, and vale, and plain;

Then

* This ſplendid appearance could be no other than a meteor or globe of light in the atmoſphere, for no fixed ſtar, planet, or comet could ſtand over any particular houſe, town, country, or nation.

Then where the royal babe was laid,
Directly o'er the houſe it ſtay'd.
With joy the chiefs the child behold,
They offer frankincenſe and gold,
With various ſorts of precious ſtores,
Which the rich eaſt in plenty pours.
But they to Herod ne'er return;
For ſo the will of Heaven they learn,
By viſion taught. Then each regains
Their own rich mountains, and their plains:
And joy in every boſom ſprings;
For they had ſeen the King of kings!
Soon after this an angel came,
And ſtood by Joſeph in a dream:
Joſeph, he cry'd, without delay
The child and mother take away;
Them both to diſtant Egypt bring,
Or Judah's hated tyrant king
The lovely infant will deſtroy.
The family directly fly

O'er

O'er Judah's hills and each fair plain,
And soon the land of Egypt gain,
Where they in peace long time remain;
Till Herod laid his hated head
Amongst the vile and worthless dead.

The restless tyrant, when he learn'd
That the wise men had not return'd,
But had departed from the land,
Regardless of his high command;
With horrid cruelty decreed
All the whole infant race to bleed,
That under two years old were found
In Bethlehem, and the country round.
To execute the tyrant's aim
A band of ruffian soldiers came;
Babes from their mothers' breasts they tore,
And Judah's streams ran infant gore.

Swift vengeance seiz'd old Herod's breath;
And laid the tyrant low in death;

When from the ſkies an angel came,
And told good Joſeph, in a dream,
That Iſrael's land he might explore,
For cruel Herod was no more.
With ready zeal the ſire return'd;
But ſoon with great concern he learn'd,
That though the tyrant king was dead,
Now reign'd o'er Judah in his ſtead
His ſon Archelaus. † Full of fear,
The wary chief would not go there:
To Galilee he turn'd aſide,
And would in Nazareth abide.
When, fixing in their firſt abode,
The pair brought up the Son of God;
Who ſubject to their rule remain'd,
Till he his thirtieth year had gain'd.

HISTORY

† As Herod Antipas, another of Herod's ſons, had the government of Galilee, it muſt be ſuppoſed, that Archelaus was noted for a diſpoſition like his father, which was the reaſon that Joſeph was afraid to enter his kingdom.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

Christ disputeth with the Doctors in the Temple.

Luke, ch. ii.

NOW twice six times the circling sun
Had through the winding zodiac run,
Since he beheld the happy morn
When the great Prince of peace was born.
His parents every rolling year
At great Jerusalem appear,
To eat the passover, and praise
The GOD that measures out our days.
With them, all amiable and mild,
They now had brought the holy child.
Long as the rites require they stay,
Then joyful homeward take their way.
The first day's journey they had run,
When evening came they miss'd their son:

They ſearch'd amongſt their kindred round,
But yet the child could not be found:
Then back they tread the road with pain,
And ſearch'd through Salem; but in vain.
Three days they ſought; and wondering then
Amongſt a band of learned men,
In cloſe debate on themes profound,
Within the temple's holy ground,
The much-admired child they found.
All wonder'd at his mighty mind:
He to his parents ſtood reſign'd;
And with them to their houſe proceeds,
Till call'd by Heaven to greater deeds.

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

The Life, Preaching, and Death of John the Baptist.

Matt. ch. iii. *Mark*, ch. i. *Luke*, ch. iii. *John*, ch. i.

NOW rapid time, with ceaſeleſs ſpeed,
Had brought the days by Heaven decreed
To open the deſigns of grace
To man's rebellious fallen race:
When the eternal GOD inſpires,
With holy zeal and heavenly fires,
His ſervant John. Long he abode
In private, and convers'd with GOD
In the lone deſert; coarſe his fare,
And contemplation all his care:
A camel's ſkin had wrapt him round,
And with a leathern girdle bound;

On

On Jordan's banks the holy man
The glorious work of God began.
Beneath the open azure ſkies,
With ſacred zeal, he propheſies:
Thy God, O Iſrael, comes! let all
In deep abaſement proſtrate fall:
Repent of each deteſted ſtain!
And hail the glories of his reign!
From every ſin and folly turn;
For like a fire his wrath will burn,
Conſuming both the earth and ſkies,
As raging flame the chaff deſtroys.

The nation heard the heavenly ſtrain,
Nor long the prophet preach'd in vain;
Vaſt crowds attend the awful ſound
From all the neigbouring regions round:
Confeſſing all their ſins they came,
And were baptiz'd in Jordan's ſtream,
Which breaks on Enon's winding ſhores,
Or through rich Salem's paſtures roars.

Think not, they heard the prophet ſay,
The ſtream has waſh'd your ſtains away;
But let the new-baptiz'd attend,
And all their wicked ways amend.
To the tree's root the ax is laid,
Which ſoon will fell the loſty ſhade:
No fair pretence can ſave; but all
That bear not fruit ſhall ſurely fall.

With ardent zeal the prophet tries
To teach the nation to be wiſe:
He for no prieſt or doctor car'd;
Nor vice, howe'er exalted, ſpar'd:
The inceſtuous king he boldly blam'd,
And all his evil deeds proclaim'd;
Who, by outrageous paſſion led,
Had late defil'd his brother's bed;
And to indulge his lawleſs flame,
He in his court detain'd the dame:
The fair his horrid love allows,
And would be thought his lawful ſpouſe.

Three years the seer, by Heaven's command,
Repentance preach'd o'er all the land;
But if MESSIAH e'er was nam'd,
The glorious title he disclaim'd.
But as too plain his speech had been,
And rous'd the vengeance of the † queen;

The

† This princess, whose name was Herodias, was daughter to Aristobulus, the son of Herod by Mariamne; who was put to death by the cruelty of his father. She was first married to Herod Philip, her uncle; but afterwards eloped from him, to marry Herod Antipas, the governor of Galilee, his brother; who being sharply reproved by John the Baptist, was so offended that he committed him to prison; but durst not put him to death, for fear of the people; till, on his birth-day, the daughter of Herodias having exceedingly pleased him by her dancing, he promised with an oath, to give her whatever she desired. The damsel, being instructed by her mother, demanded the head of John the Baptist; which was given her: the prophet being beheaded in prison.

The king, the haughty fair to pleaſe,
The man of God in priſon lays:
And there the prophet muſt abide,
Till by her wicked arts he dy'd.

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

Chriſt's Baptiſm, Faſting, and Temptation.

Matt. ch. iii. & iv. *Mark*, ch. i. *Luke*, ch. iii. & iv.

WHEN three revolving years had ran,
Since the great Baptiſt firſt began
The work of God; to Jordan's ſtream
Amongſt the reſt the Saviour came:
Baptiſmal rites he there demands;
The holy man reluctant ſtands;
For not unknown to him drew nigh
The Son of God. And have not I,
In haſte the prophet cry'd, more need
To be baptiz'd by thee! Proceed

In this I dare not. Christ replies,
With heavenly mildness in his eyes,
It is my mighty Father's will
That I all righteousness fulfil;
Then suffer it to be. The seer,
No longer touch'd by timorous fear,
To him, in Jordan's rolling wave,
The sacred rite directly gave.
The God, ascending from the flood,
On the green margin praying stood;
When down from the observing skies,
Dove-like, the Eternal Spirit flies;
And on his holy head appear'd,
While from on high these sounds were heard:
This is my well-beloved Son!
Well-pleas'd I view what he hath done!
He comes to take your sins away:
Hear, all ye nations, and obey!
To the lone desert, from the stream,
The Son of God, the Saviour came:

Deep in the bosom of the shade
He meditated, and he pray'd
Full forty days. But nature fails,
And raging hunger now prevails.
Old Satan the advantage takes,
And soon a furious onset makes:
In human form the fiend appear'd,
And thus his fraudful voice was heard;
Art thou the Son of GOD indeed!
And of provisions stand in need!
If thou art Heaven's almighty LORD,
All nature will obey thy word:
Then change at once these stones to bread,
And let both thee and I be fed.
The Son of GOD through his disguise
The fiend well knew; and thus replies:
The GOD that o'er creation reigns,
The numerous race of man sustains
By such provisions, and such means

As

As his own will prescribes. 'Tis known,
Man does not live by bread alone;
But manna, * if it please the LORD:
So is it written in his word.
The baffled fiend his power still tries;
And with the great Redeemer flies
To where the temple's turrets rise.
The pinnacle, aloft in air,
He makes his choice, and sets him there:
Now if thy claim be just, he cries,
This giddy height thou may'st despise;
And, sure to win great Judah's crown,
In open view thyself cast down:
If thou art Heaven's eternal heir,
Not this great fall can be thy fear;
For GOD, whose word is sure, hath said,
He'll send his angels to thy aid;
Thou to all hurt shalt stand unknown,
Nor dash thy foot against a stone.

The

* Deut. viii. 3.

The Son of God the tempter ey'd
With full diſdain, and thus reply'd:
Though Satan now would fain be wiſe,
The written word againſt him lies;
Let no preſumptuous paths be trod;
Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God!
Such is his word. The wily fiend,
Though twice repuls'd, as yet diſdain'd
To yield the victory won. Then takes
The great Redeemer up, and makes
For a vaſt mountain, on the crown
He ſets the ſacred burden down.
Then by his bold deluſive powers
He brings vaſt cities, temples, towers,
And all the glorious glittering things
Which wait on empires, and on kings,
Full on the ſight; all round they lie,
And ſwell upon the wandering eye:
To fill the heart the whole combines,
And all the gaudy landſcape ſhines.

All this, the dæmon cries, is mine,
And by my gift it ſhall be thine:
If o'er the earth's exſended plain
It be thy noble choice to reign,
Fall down and worſhip me. And ſhall,
The Saviour cry'd, I ſtoop to fall
And worſhip Satan! when the LORD
Hath taught his people by his word,
No impious idol gods to own;
But worſhip him, and him alone.
Thou and thy wiles are all diſdain'd!
Then get thee back to hell, thou fiend!
Away the vaniſh'd tempter ſneaks,
And ſoon uncommon glory breaks
From a bright cloud: and then deſcends
A flight of cherubs, which attends
On the exalted King of kings,
And heavenly food in plenty brings.

HISTORY THE NINTH.

The Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Christ, from the Beginning of his public Ministry, * *to the First Passover.*

Collected from the Four Evangelists.

WHEN from the chearful eyes of day
Conceal'd the noble Baptist lay,
Because to blame the king he dar'd,
Nor vice, though on a throne, had spar'd;
The Son of God, by Heaven rever'd,
In the great work himself appear'd.
By power divine he wonders wrought,
The will of God sublimely taught:

From

* The opening of the glorious Gospel was carried on about three years and a half under the ministry of John the Baptist, who being at that time cast into prison, Christ himself continued it for three years and a half more, till the time of his crucifixion.

PRIDEAUX.

From every vice and folly draws,
And firm in truth and virtue's cause,
Unmov'd he stood, both day and night,
Brought immortality to light;
Then to secure eternal joys
To all his faithful followers, dies.

Beyond great Judah's noted tide
The Baptist saw the LORD, and cry'd,
Behold the Lamb of GOD! This heard
Enquiring Peter, and appear'd
With pious Andrew. They were join'd,
With eager steps and ardent mind,
By Philip and Nathanael. All
With joy on the Redeemer call,
As GOD's high Son, and Israel's king,
Who great salvation came to bring.

At Cana was a marriage feast;
The mother of the LORD was guest:
Jesus with his disciples join;
But e'er 'twas o'er they wanted wine.

Mary

Mary the caſe before him laid,
And bids them do whate'er he ſaid.
The ſervants eyes were fix'd on him;
He bids them fill up to the brim
With water clear, ſix large ſtone jars:
They fill, and draw; a ſervant bears
Quick to the ruler of the feaſt,
Who ſoon declares this wine the beſt.
The thing was known, and all admir'd;
With full belief his train retir'd.

Then to Capernaum goes the LORD,
And there he preach'd the heavenly word;
With ardent zeal the people taught,
And wonderous works amongſt them wrought:
But ſoon to Zion takes his way,
There to attend the ſolemn day
When they paſchal feaſt prepar'd,
In which the nation yearly ſhar'd.
There when his angry eye ſurvey'd
The people carrying on their trade

Within the temple's ſacred walls,
With a ſmall whip he on them falls;
Drives all before him as he goes,
And all their tables overthrows.
Then in the city he proceeds
To miracles and mighty deeds.
To him a learned doctor came;
And Nicodemus was his name:
But came by night, diſgrace to ſhun,
And to the LORD his language run:
Thou art a teacher ſent from heaven;
For not to common men is given
To work ſuch wonders. Chriſt replies,
To heavenly glories none can riſe
Except they're born again. The chief
Concludes this doctrine paſt belief,
So ſtrange it ſeems. The LORD rejoins,
While in his face freſh glory ſhines,
That all muſt be, who to him turn,
Of water and the ſpirit born.

The heavenly teacher then declares,
While the learn'd ſcribe with wonder hears,
That as the ſerpent high appear'd,
Which Moſes in the deſert rear'd,
So muſt the Son of God on high
To ſave the men that own him die;
And who believes, and loves his ways,
He will to life eternal raiſe.

HISTORY the TENTH.

The Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Chriſt continued, from the Firſt to the Second Paſſover after the Commencement of his public Miniſtry.

Collected from the Four Evangeliſts.

NOW Chriſt and his diſciples came
To ſacred Jordan's ſwelling ſtream:
There, while the rapid current rolls,
He ſpread abroad the food for ſouls;

And those who by his words abide
Baptizes * in the flowing tide.
Prodigious crowds each day appear,
And press about the Saviour there.

Then fam'd for his immortal deeds,
To Galilee he soon proceeds.
His way lies through Samaria's plains,
Whose hatred to the Jews remains;
And, while the noon's bright splendors blaze,
Near Shechem's ancient town he stays:
And there with weariness oppress'd
At Jacob's well he sits to rest.
A woman soon approach'd to draw,
Whom when the great Redeemer saw,
He asks to drink: and then succeeds
A short discourse, when Christ proceeds
To inform the fair, that God most high
To all true worshippers is nigh:

To

* Christ baptized not himself, but by his disciples.

To every prayer his ear he'll bend;
And nations need no more contend
About the place where heaven's high LORD
Will his moſt holy name record.
The Saviour farther to the fair
Proceeds his miſſion to declare;
And mentions her moſt ſecret deeds,
To which her full belief ſucceeds.
She tells the townſmen: they believe,
And with glad hearts the truth receive;
Invite the LORD: and two full days
With them at Shechem JESUS ſtays.

To Nazareth then proceeds the LORD,
There boldly preach'd the heavenly word;
And plainly to himſelf applies
Part of Iſaiah's prophecies.
Though they admire his manly ſenſe,
His meanneſs gives them vaſt offence:
Who is this man, they jointly cry!
What is he more than you or I!

His

His parents and his trade we know,
Why ſhould he be exalted ſo!
With gentle blame the LORD replies,
That their objection is not wiſe:
No prophet that e'er yet appear'd
Was in his native place rever'd.
Enrag'd the townſmen riſe, and cry,
That he for this deſerves to die:
Then lead him to the mountain's crown,
With full deſign to throw him down:
But, over-aw'd by power divine,
They quickly drop the baſe deſign:
Forth from the crowd the Saviour goes,
Not one amongſt them dare oppoſe.

From thence to Cana Chriſt proceeds,
And marks his way with mighty deeds.
A nobleman of wealth and fame
To him from fair Capernaum came;

For

For his ſick ſon he of the LORD,
In humble ſtrain, a cure implor'd.
This moment is thy ſon reſtor'd,
Depart in peace! the LORD return'd:
He goes, and ſoon the truth he learn'd;
A ſervant came the news to tell,
That from that hour his ſon was well.

Now to the margin of the main *.
Deſcends the Saviour with his train;
And divers there his eye ſurvey'd,
Attending on their fiſhing trade.
Simon and Andrew called he;
And the two ſons of Zebedee.
Attentive to the heavenly call,
They leave their work, and follow all.

Chriſt

* The ſea or lake ſo often mentioned in the Evangeliſts, was the ſea of Tiberias; or, which is the ſame, the lake of Genneſareth; which, according to Joſephus, was 100 furlongs in length and 40 wide.

Chrift to Capernaum takes his way;
And preaching on the fabbath day,
A man appear'd amongft the reft
That by a dæmon was poffeft.
The fiend cry'd out, Let us alone!
Thou art by all our legions known;
Jefus of Nazareth, each one knows;
We dare not thy command oppofe,
But jointly tremble at thy nod;
Thou art the Holy One of GOD!
Then hold thy peace, the Saviour faid,
And leave the man! The fiend obey'd.
Then cry'd the crowd in wild amaze,
What power is this which hell obeys!
To Peter's houfe the Saviour went,
Whofe mother all her friends lament:
A burning fever fhe fuftains,
And faft the dire diftemper gains:
They feek the LORD; their fuit he hears:
The fever inftant difappears,

Rebuk'd

Rebuk'd by him. The matron rose,
And to her usual business goes.
All o'er the country spread his fame;
The sick, and the diseased came.
Whatever miseries they endure,
They by his word receive a cure.
His word none dare to disobey;
But devils howl, and leave their prey.
Then to the desert he repairs,
And spreads before the LORD his prayers.
When found, the multitude in vain
The great Redeemer would detain.
To various cities he proceeds,
And there performs immortal deeds:
The friend of all mankind he stood,
And spent his days in doing good.
Again he to Capernaum came,
Which sounded forth his former fame.
The pressing crowd with pain he bore;
And soon retreated to the shore

Of the Salt Lake. A ſhip he takes,
And from the deck a ſermon makes:
(The ſhip was Peter's) when he ceas'd,
The LORD the owner thus addreſs'd:
Put out to ſea, and for a draught
Let down your net. They did; and caught
Fiſh in ſuch numbers, from the main,
As two fair ſhips could ſcarce contain.

The ſea-beat ſhore the Saviour leaves;
And in the city ſuccour gives
To a poor leper, who apply'd,
LORD, thou canſt make me clean! he cry'd:
The Son of GOD with pity heard;
The leproſy no more appear'd,
But from his touch immediate flies.
Then one was brought that helpleſs lies,
By a dead palſy long confin'd;
To make him way the ſervants join'd:
But ſuch vaſt crowds the LORD ſurround,
His earneſt friends no method found

To

To bring him near. Access to gain,
On the house-top ascend the train;
The roof untile; and from the crown
They let the paralytic down.
The LORD well-pleas'd the deed surveys,
Thy sins are all forgiven! he says.
The haughty scribes and pharisees
Then charge the LORD with blasphemies.
Christ let them know, when men believe
Their Saviour can their sins forgive.
Take up thy bed, and go thy way!
They hear him to the lame man say:
Then at the word behold him rise;
And Israel's GOD he glorifies.

The Roman tribute to receive,
Which all the Jews reluctant give,
Sat Matthew at the appointed place.
Jesus, with kindness in his face,
Beheld; and, Follow me, he said,
The publican the LORD obey'd.

With ready heart his train he join'd,
And left his cash and books behind.

HISTORY THE ELEVENTH.

The Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Christ continued from the Second to the Third Passover, after the Commencement of his public Ministry.

Collected from the Four Evangelists.

THEN Jesus rose to Zion's towers,
Where the assembled nation pours
To the passover's annual feast;
And there he succours the distress'd.
Soon to Bethesda's pool he goes;
And there his God-like mercy shews
To a poor cripple, who appears
To have been lame near forty years.
Take up thy bed, and walk! then says
The Son of GOD: the man obeys,

Takes up his bed, and through the ſtreets
The burden bears. But ſoon he meets
The angry Jews; and this their ſtrain,
How dar'ſt thou boldly thus profane
The ſabbath-day! The man, he ſaid,
That cur'd me, bid me bear my bed.
Who is that man! they fierce enquir'd;
But Jeſus had e'er this retir'd.
At length 'twas known: and then they cry,
That juſtly he deſerves to die:
And him with hatred they regard,
Becauſe he had himſelf declar'd
The Son of God. Then through the fields,
While Judah's land its harveſt yields,
The Lord proceeds with all his train,
And nodding bends the yellow grain.
'Twas on the ſacred ſabbath-day,
And as they went along the way,
The ears they pluck, the corn they eat,
And ſhare well-pleas'd the rural treat.

The

The pharisees aloud complain,
That they the sabbath-day profane.
Jesus replies, and gives the word,
That of the sabbath he is LORD.

Then to Capernaum, high in fame,
He the succeeding sabbath came.
The synagogue his train revere,
And join the sacred worship there.
Amongst the rest was seen to stand
A cripple with a wither'd hand;
The LORD dispels the dire disease.
The pharisees a tumult raise.
The fierce Herodians join the cry,
And doom the Son of GOD to die.

To the sea coast the LORD retir'd:
The multitude his deeds admir'd:
Prodigious crowds attend him there,
His works to see, and words to hear.
The press to shun, without delay
He left the shore, and cross'd the sea.

To

To a bleak mountain he repairs,
And ſpends the night in fervent prayers,
Alone retir'd. When morning roſe,
He down to his diſciples goes;
And from the number, twelve he choſe
Apoſtles; in commiſſion join'd,
To preach his name to all mankind.
Then ſtanding on the mountain ſide,
(The crowd below extended wide)
In a ſublime, immortal ſtrain
He then proceeded to explain
His moral precepts; and diſplays
Thoſe God-like virtues, which will raiſe
And dignify the Chriſtian name.
Not to deſtroy the law he came,
But to eſtabliſh, and enforce.
And in his wonderful diſcourſe
He meekneſs, juſtice, goodneſs taught,
Repentance true for every fault;

Fair

Fair mercy with her noble train;
And purity that knows no ſtain;
Firm fortitude life's ills to bear;
Contentment, that ſubdues all care
By reſignation and by prayer.
And to ſuch heights his precepts roſe,
He teaches us to love our foes.
With ſuch ſimplicity and force
Our LORD continued his diſcourſe;
The wondering crowd upon him gaz'd,
At once confounded and amáz'd.
Soon as he ceas'd, a leper pray'd
His kind compaſſion, and his aid.
His dreadful caſe the LORD attends,
And cleanſed to the prieſt he ſends.
Chriſt to Capernaum takes his way:
There a centurion comes, to pray,
If on the LORD he may prevail
To come, and his ſick ſervant heal.

The

The LORD consents: but e'er he goes,
His lively faith the Gentile shews:
I am not worthy, LORD, I know,
That thou towards my house should'st go:
All nature subject is to thee;
Speak but the word, and it shall be!
So spake the chief: the LORD approv'd;
And the complaint at once remov'd.

To Nain then the LORD proceeds,
And marks his way with greater deeds.
For near the city on the plain
Approach'd a long and mournful train:
A widow's only son and heir,
To the cold grave they weeping bear.
The mother, overpower'd with woes,
In all the depth of sorrow goes.
The LORD with pity saw her tears,
And with kind words the mourner chears:
Weep not! he cry'd: then touch'd the dead;
The bier stood still, and loud he said:

Young man, I ſay to thee, ariſe!
The youth reviv'd, and fix'd his eyes
Full on the LORD. When this was done,
He to the dame reſtor'd her ſon.
Then Jeſus to the city goes.
To him one Simon kindneſs ſhews:
And ſitting in his houſe at meat,
While the glad hoſt prolong'd the treat,
One that was known a wanton fair,
Wip'd Jeſus' feet dry with her hair,
She firſt had waſh'd them with her tears.
Surpriz'd the phariſee appears,
That Chriſt ſhould let her make ſo free.
To this the LORD replies, that ſhe
Feels ſuch repentance and ſuch love,
As all that know muſt needs approve:
Then tells her, ſhe's belov'd by heaven,
And has her numerous ſins forgiven.
While mighty crowds the LORD ſurround,
He was by his relations found.

But

But ſo prodigious was the preſs,
To him they could not gain acceſs.
His way of life they jointly blame;
To take him with them home, they came.
When ſome of thoſe who ſtood more near,
Inform'd him that his friends were there.
They are my friends, the LORD declar'd,
By whom my words are gladly heard:
And him with love my eye ſurveys,
Who beſt my Father's will obeys.

Then by his power the LORD redreſs'd
One that a dæmon had poſſeſs'd,
Both blind and dumb. With envious eye
The phariſees behold, and cry,
It is by Satan's power, no doubt,
That thus he caſts the devils out.
A ſign they aſk: the LORD of heaven
Declares, no ſign ſhall now be given,
But that of Jonas; when he lay
Three days beneath the rolling ſea,

Thus under earth the Saviour lies
Three days, and then ſhall glorious riſe.

The ſea-beat ſhore the Saviour ſought:
There in a ſhip he ſat, and taught.
And ſhew'd, in parabolic * ſtrain,
MESSIAH's kingdom, and his reign.
At night he croſs'd the foamy ſea,
And ſleeping in the veſſel lay;
While the rough winds, and roaring tides,
The ſhip, half ſinking, ſcarce abides.
In deep diſtreſs the LORD they wake:
He roſe; and to the winds he ſpake.
The winds and waves his voice obey;
Clear were the ſkies, and calm the ſea.

Arriving on the other ſhore,
His preſence makes the devils roar.

Two

* The parables which Chriſt propoſed at this time were, That of the ſower: That of the candle put under a buſhel: That of the tares of the field: That of the grain of muſtard-ſeed: and, That of the leaven. Matt. xiii.

Two men, amongſt the tombs, they find,
So fierce no cord or chain could bind,
One by a legion was poſſeſs'd:
To Jeſus they their ſuit addreſs'd,
That they might not be ſent to dwell
In the dark deep abyſs of hell;
But as along the mountain ſide
A numerous herd of ſwine they ſpy'd,
The devils humbly begg'd, that when
They were oblig'd to leave the men,
The LORD would to their wiſh incline,
And let them all poſſeſs the ſwine.
Jeſus conſents: and at his word
The devils enter'd in the herd.
Strange madneſs ſeiz'd the briſtly train,
Who toſs, and foam, and rage. In vain
Their keepers ſtrive to rule them. Down
Impetuous from the mountain's crown,
They with blind fury drive away,
And all were drowned in the ſea.

The

The foolish owners of the herd,
Their swine before their souls prefer'd;
Before the LORD submissive stand,
And humbly beg he'll leave the land.
The great Redeemer cross'd the sea,
And to Capernaum took his way.
Jarius, a ruler of the Jews,
With his request the LORD pursues,
And begs his mighty power to save
His only daughter from the grave.
Jesus consents: and as he goes,
An aged woman touch'd his cloaths:
A cure she found. But soon was sped
A message, that the maid was dead,
From Jairus' house. There Jesus went;
Not long the father need lament.
From death's cold arms the maid he rais'd;
The joyful sire JEHOVAH prais'd.
To Nazareth then proceeds the LORD:
And was by two blind men implor'd

To give them ſight: Their ſuit he heard,
And to their view the plains appear'd.
Then one by a foul fiend poſſeſs'd,
Was by his mighty power redreſs'd:
And o'er the land he ſends his train,
To preach MESSIAH, and his reign.

Prodigious crowds the LORD incloſe,
Where'er he ſtays, where'er he goes.
When to enjoy ſome ſhort repoſe,
He with his ſervants croſs'd the ſea,
And to the deſert took his way.
There on a mountain's ſhaggy ſide
A while the heavenly train abide.
The multitude this underſtand,
They take a compaſs round by land;
And e'er the ſun plung'd in the main,
The mountain's foot great numbers gain.
Jeſus deſcends, himſelf reveals,
Then the diſeas'd amongſt them heals.

And

And while the day's bright splendors burn,
His servants urg'd them to return.
Give them to eat, the Lord commands;
When each disciple wondering stands.
Where shall we find, they cry'd, the bread.
With which these thousands must be fed?
Five little loaves is all we have,
With two small fishes. Jesus gave
The multitude command to sit:
The bread he brake himself: and it
The twelve apostles carried round.
Five thousand eat, and plenty found.
And twelve large baskets scarce contain
The scatter'd fragments that remain.

The multitude, with grateful heart,
Were not contented to depart:
But Jesus they propos'd to bring,
And at the town proclaim him king.
Jesus refus'd the name to take.
But bids his followers cross the lake,

He

He to the mountain will repair,
And ſpend the night in fervent prayer.
Then the diſciples take their way
Without the LORD, and put to ſea;
The wind, contrary on the main,
But one poor league all night they gain.
When morning roſe, with trembling awe
And wild ſurprize the ſailors ſaw
A man come walking on the ſea,
And to their veſſel take his way.
Jeſus approach'd to chaſe their fear,
And lets them know himſelf was there.
Peter rejoic'd his LORD to ſee:
O let me come and walk with thee,
Was his petition. With conſent
He down into the water went.
Some time he walk'd: but when he ſpies
The mighty billows round him riſe,
His courage fail'd him, and he cries,

As fast he sinks, Oh save me, LORD!
Jesus approaches at the word,
And takes his hand. Then from the main
The ship's high deck they jointly gain.
Swift as the wind she cleaves the sea,
And at her destin'd port she lay.

The multitude the knowledge gain'd,
That Jesus had behind remain'd,
When the disciples put to sea;
And when the morn restor'd the day,
They pour along the mountain side:
Where can the Master be, they cry'd!
At length the wonderous news they gain,
That he was seen beyond the main:
They follow. Soon the LORD they found,
With shouts of joy they him surround;
In vast surprise they all appear;
Master, they cry, how cam'st thou here?
The LORD replies, they round him spread
Only because he gave them bread,

When heavenly food was more their need,
And that his flesh was meat indeed.
When thus the LORD was heard to say,
Great numbers murmuring went away.

HISTORY THE TWELFTH.

The Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Christ continued, from the Third Passover after the Commencement of his public Ministry, to his being apprehended by the treachery of Judas.

Collected from the Four Evangelists.

NOW to soft Sidon's sea-beat shores,
Descending from great Salem's towers,
The Son of GOD, the Saviour came:
To him approach'd a mournful dame;
Whose daughter grievous ills sustaine;
An envious dæmon caus'd her paine.

Christ to her suit will not reply:
His followers, wearied with her cry,
Besought; but heard the LORD declare,
That only Israel was his care.
But, ardent in her daughter's cause,
The anxious parent not withdraws.
To her the great Redeemer said,
I must not take the children's bread,
And give to dogs. The dame replies;
LORD, I confess thy words are wise!
Yet oft the dog devoureth all
The crumbs which from the table fall.
Great is thy faith! reply'd the LORD,
And heal'd her daughter with a word.

By Jordan's springs Christ took his way,
And stretch'd a compass round the sea:
Where one both deaf and dumb appear'd;
Soon by almighty power he heard
And spake. The Saviour rose;
And up a mountain's side he goes,

Where

Where on the crown three days abode,
Alone retir'd, the Son of God.
When from the height he took his way,
Vast numbers of sick people lay,
The lofty mountain's foot around:
His heavenly mercy there they found:
Whate'er their sickness or their pain,
Immediate relief they gain.
But, as the multitude had stay'd
Three days to wait the Saviour's aid,
The Lord to his disciples said,
They should not go till they were fed.
Then soon they their provisions spread;
Seven loaves were all. And these they take,
The Saviour first gave thanks, and brake:
The multitude, spread far and wide,
Sat down along the mountain side:
With joy the rural treat they share:
Four thousand eat, and none need spare.

Then

Then Jesus cross'd the foaming sea,
And to Magdala took his way.
The pharisees against him join,
And in derision ask a sign.
Can ye with skill, the LORD replies,
Observe the clouds and read the skies,
And yet so ignorant remain
When great MESSIAH was to reign!
No sign this wicked race shall gain
But that of Jonas, when he lay
Three days beneath the swelling sea.

Then Jesus to Bethsaida steer'd,
And when a poor blind man appear'd,
Restor'd his sight. The multitude
With wild amaze his wonders view'd;
And various notions form'd: One said,
This prophet's risen from the dead;
Another that: In Herod's eyes
None was so likely thus to rise

As John the Baptist. But the LORD
By his disciples stood ador'd
As CHRIST the Son of GOD. Their view
His rising empire would pursue,
They thought he'd David's sceptre gain,
And over all the nations reign:
In every heart, in every mind,
So bright the great idea shin'd,
That tho' the LORD with frequent care
Strove for his sufferings to prepare;
And let them know to him remain'd,
By the eternal GOD ordain'd,
Contempt and scorn; and last to die;
They from the thought abherrent fly,
And, sure he will the throne ascend,
Who shall be greatest they contend.

Great Tabor's top the LORD ascends,
There Peter on his steps attends,
With James and John. Soon on their sight
Darted a blaze of heavenly light:

Bright

Bright as the beauteous beams of day,
With garments white and pure as they,
The Saviour was beheld to shine,
In dazzling lustre all divine.
To him two heavenly forms descend,
And hold discourse as with a friend;
For Moses and Elijah known;
And bright in glittering robes they shone,
Of things to come their converse ran,
And heaven's designs of love to man;
The Saviour, whom the Jews despise,
Ordain'd to die; and then to rise;
Peter, elate, was heard to say,
LORD, let us here for ever stay!
These heavenly guests with joy we see;
And houses build for them and thee.
While thus he spake, from a bright cloud,
An awful voice thus calls aloud:
Mortals, attend! to you is given,
The Son of GOD, the heir of heaven!

Well-pleas'd, I all his deeds survey;
Hear him, ye nations! and obey.
These sounds the three disciples heard
With trembling awe and shivering fear;
And then before the LORD of all,
They on their faces prostrate fall.
The LORD beheld their deep dismay,
And gently touch'd them as they lay:
At once the heavenly scene withdrew;
Jesus alone appeared in view,
In his own form. Then from the crown
Of lofty Tabor they go down.

Not far remote they quickly find
Other disciples, who had join'd
In their LORD's absence to expel
One of the horrid train of hell.
Them the fierce dæmon had withstood;
Nor could they do the young man good.
The anxious father saw the LORD,
And humbly now his help implor'd;

With his requeſt the LORD complies,
The youth's reſtor'd, the devil flies.
Chriſt having preach'd through Galilee,
Goes to Capernaum near the ſea.
The gatherers of the tribute came;
And Peter urg'd to pay the ſame.
The good man, by his LORD's command,
Goes with his tackle to the ſtrand;
Caſt in his line, and with his hook,
A ſcaly fiſh directly took;
Its mouth he open'd, and ſurvey'd
The money which the tribute paid.
An annual feaſt * to Zion's walls
The whole aſſembled nation calls.
Jeſus intending to go there,
And at the ſacred feaſt appear,
His way thro' fair Samaria lies;
Which to receive the LORD denies:

For

* The feaſt of Pentecoſt, celebrated fifty days after the Paſſover.

For out of hatred to the Jews,
Each friendly office they refuſe.
Of their refuſal and diſdain
The griev'd diſciples loud complain.
Let us, the whole aſſembly cries,
Invoke the vengeance of the ſkies,
To wrap the country round in fire;
And let the churliſh race expire.
The LORD their angry ſpirit blames,
And heaven's rich mercy then proclaims;
Whoſe love the great Redeemer gave,
Not to deſtroy men's lives, but ſave.

The LORD and his diſciple train
Two pious ſiſters entertain
At Bethany. A noble feaſt
They make for ſuch a worthy gueſt.
Martha with hurrying, anxious cares,
And liberal hand the treat prepares.
But Mary, as ſhe lov'd the LORD,
Sat at his feet, and heard his word.

To him griev'd Martha loud complains,
That ſhe alone the toil ſuſtains.
To her complaint the LORD replies,
That Mary's conduct is more wiſe:
For ſhe, with worthy zeal, purſues
That better part ſhe ne'er can loſe.

The ſacred feaſt Chriſt having ſhar'd,
He to Capernaum then repair'd:
Where, on the ſabbath-day, he cur'd
One that a dropſy long endur'd:
And made it plainly underſtood,
'Tis always lawful to do good.
To Galilee's ſmall towns he goes,
Where free his noble doctrine flows;
And ſhews that ſelf muſt be deny'd
By all that in the truth abide.

Chriſt to Jeruſalem returns.*
His coming all the city learns;

Vaſt

* The Redeemer went to Jeruſalem at this time to keep the feaſt of Tabernacles, celebrated the thirteenth of October.

Vaſt crowds ſurround him, and admire
His noble eloquence and fire.
About him ſtrange conjectures riſe;
Some honour him, and ſome deſpiſe.
The phariſees in concert join,
And to detain him now deſign.
Their meſſengers aſtoniſhed ſtand,
Nor can fulfil the baſe command.
They hear him; but they dare not take:
For never mortal like him ſpake.

Then, while he in the temple taught,
Cover'd with ſhame, a fair was brought,
That could illicit love allow,
And late had broke her marriage vow.
Moſes commands, they jointly cry,
That every vile adultreſs die;
But, ere the deadly caſt be thrown,
We judge it right thy will be known.
Wanting the Saviour to accuſe,
This queſtion put the ſpiteful Jews.

Jeſus,

Jesus, their malice to confound,
Stoop'd down: and writing on the ground
Made no reply. At length he rose:
Let him, he cry'd, that at her throws
From this great crime be clear. Then they
Being self-condemned, all sneak away.
The woman stood when all retir'd.
Art thou condemn'd? the LORD enquir'd.
She answer'd, no. The GOD replies,
With heavenly mildness in his eyes,
I not condemn thee, but restore;
Then go thy ways, and sin no more.

A man that ne'er had seen the light,
Next day the Saviour bless'd with sight.
This person was through Salem known,
And now with vast amazement shewn.
Great was the noise through all the town:
The pharisees upon him frown.
The man and his glad parents too,
Boldly declare the cure is true,

By heavenly goodness thus restor'd,
He prais'd the goodness of the LORD.

To Galilee the LORD retir'd:
But as his piety desir'd
To keep the feast, * he with his train,
To Zion's towers returns again.
Now through Samaria's towns he goes;
And there his God-like goodness shews.
Ten leprous men at once drew nigh,
And loudly all for mercy cry.
Go to the priest without delay,
They gladly heard the Saviour say,
And all are heal'd while on the way.
With glad surprize their cure they learn'd;
Yet of the ten but one return'd
To thank the LORD for such rich grace;
And of Samaria was his race.

Then

* The feast of Dedication, celebrated the 15th of December.

Then croſs great Jordan's ſwelling ſtream,
From Salem's walls, the Saviour came.
And while he in theſe parts remain'd,
From Bethany he knowledge gain'd,
That ſeiz'd with ſickneſs Lazarus * lies,
And without heavenly aid he dies.
Not unto death, then Chriſt replies,
This ſickneſs is; but that the LORD
May be exalted and ador'd.
Jeſus two days thought fit to ſtay:
To Bethany then took his way.
But death had made the youth his prey,
Before the LORD of life appear'd;
And lamentation loud was heard.
The houſe of mourning he attends;
His tears he mixes with his friends.
Then Martha to the Saviour cry'd,
Hadſt thou been here he had not dy'd.

To

* Lazarus was brother to Mary and Martha, the ſiſters that entertained the LORD at Bethany.

To chase her sorrows, Jesus then
Informs her, he shall rise again.
Soon to the grave he asks to go;
There they proceed in silent woe.
Four days in death had Lazarus lay.
Christ bids them roll the stone away.
Lazarus, come forth! he loudly cries;
When the dead man was seen to rise:
His former strength and vigour knows,
And joyful with them home he goes.
Soon to Jerusalem proceed
The tidings of the wonderous deed.
And the astonish'd rulers all
Immediately a counsel call;
In which the vile and cruel band
The Saviour's instant death ordain'd.
The LORD well knew their wicked aim,
And to the banks of Jordan came:
But soon return'd their rage to stand.
The passover was near at hand,

At which it was by heaven decreed,
The Saviour of mankind ſhould bleed.

Through Jericho then Jeſus goes;
Where a blind man his goodneſs knows.
Zaccheus * fain the LORD would ſee:
He runs before, and climbs a tree.
Then Jeſus calls to him by name,
And to his houſe the Saviour came.

Jeſus departs, and on the plains
Blind Bartimeus favour gains.
Chriſt ſoon at Bethany appears,
The little town the LORD reveres;
And, when at meat, lov'd Mary ſhed
A box of ointment on his head.

The

* A publican (that is, a collector of the Roman taxes) which dwelt at Jericho. The Phariſees were much offended at Jeſus eating with the publicans, who were odious to the Jews, on account of their office, and the LORD, on this occaſion, laid before them the parable of the prodigal ſon.

The vaſt expence, falſe Judas blames,
The LORD the fair one's love proclaims;
Applauds the deed, and makes it known,
That for his burial this was done.

Soon as the morn reſtor'd the day,
Jeſus to Zion takes his way.
Now the exalted Son of GOD,
On a young aſs in triumph rode.
By heaven inſpir'd, the joyful crowd,
Threw down their cloaths, and roar'd aloud;
Hoſannah to king David's ſon!
He comes to take his father's throne!
Amidſt the ſhouts of loud acclaim,
The Saviour to the temple came.
He drives the traders out, and cures
The blind and lame, or who endures
Diſeaſe or ſickneſs. Full of joy,
Hoſannah ſtill the people cry.
The Phariſees their conduct blame,
But Jeſus vindicates the ſame:

For, did not these the silence break,
The stones that pave the streets would speak.
All day the LORD at Salem stay'd,
But ere the night had thrown her shade,
At Bethany his friends he joins,
Whence he returns when morning shines:
Being hungry, the great Son of GOD,
Saw a fair fig-tree on the road.
Large were the boughs, the leaves were green,
But when approach'd, no fruit was seen.
Then thus the LORD address'd the tree,
Let fruit no more be found on thee!
The leaves all wither'd at the sound,
And root stood perish'd in the ground.
Then Jesus to the temple went,
Where various Jews with base intent,
Propose their questions. Christ's replies
Discover him supremely wise.

In

In parabolic * ſtile he ſhews
Their ſad rejection, and their woes.—
And when his train, with wondering eyes,
Behold the temple's turrets riſe;
While the vaſt building they ſurvey'd,
This ſoon will be in ruin laid,
Reply'd the LORD. I plainly ſpy
The bitter day of vengeance nigh,
Which will this wicked town deſtroy.
While dreadful war upon her falls,
Faction will rage within her walls;
And wrap't in ſlaughter, blood and fire,
Her faithleſs ſons will all expire.
Then this prodigious pile will fall,
And one wide ruin ſwallow all.—
The LORD, with conſtant tender care,
Strove his diſciples to prepare

For

* The parables our LORD addreſſed on this occaſion, were the parable of the keepers of the vineyard; of the ten virgins; of the king's ſon, and the talents.

For their vaſt ſorrows which drew nigh,
And would produce their future joy.
Their duty he before them lays,
Directs their conduct, for them prays;
A comforter he ſays he'll ſend,
And will their every want attend.
The paſſover with them he'll ſhare,
And ſends a ſervant to prepare.
The Jews had now his death decreed,
But doubted how they ſhould proceed;
They durſt not apprehend the LORD,
Becauſe the people lov'd his word.
When in the temple he appear'd,
A tumult in his cauſe was fear'd;
Till by a bribe, falſe Judas they
Had hir'd his maſter to betray,
By night, when all was ſtill. The LORD,
According to his former word,
With his diſciples deign'd to eat
The paſſover. And while at meat,

He

He to the twelve apoſtles ſaid,
That he, that night, ſhould be betray'd
By one that at the table ſat.
This the diſciples wonder'd at;
And ſoon griev'd Peter made reply,
Tho' all forſake thee, ne'er will I!
Thy ſtrength, O Peter, Chriſt reply'd,
Will prove but weakneſs, when 'tis try'd;
I ſhall by thee be thrice deny'd,
Before the cock crow twice. Then brake
He bread, and bids them all partake,
After he bleſs'd. In love they join;
When Jeſus pour'd the ruddy wine,
Gave thanks, and gave them all to drink,
He bid them of their maſter think.
After his death repeat the ſame,
Whenever they together came;
And let this feaſt be underſtood,
An emblem of his fleſh and blood.

Then,

Then, having ſang an hymn of praiſe,
The LORD in town no longer ſtays;
The mount of Olives he aſcends,
And on him his lov'd train attends.
A village on the mountain ſide,
Stood with ſmall houſes ſcatter'd wide,
Gethſemane its name. And here
By night the holy train appear.
A garden now their ſteps exlore,
Where oft the LORD had been before.
He bids his lov'd apoſtles ſtay,
While he at diſtance goes to pray:
And tells them floods of ſorrows roll
Inceſſant on his righteous ſoul.
To a ſmall diſtance then he goes,
On the cold ground himſelf he throws,
O'erwhelm'd with terrors and with woes.
And while he to his Father pray'd,
Such agonies his ſoul invade;

He

He ſweat great drops of blood. The LORD
In this deep anguiſh ſtood ador'd
By heaven's bright ſons; and from the ſkies,
To comfort him an angel flies.

Mean while from Salem's guilty towers,
An armed force with Judas pours.
They had upon a ſign agreed,
And on the buſineſs now proceed.
To them the impious traitor ſpake,
I'll kiſs the man that you muſt take.
And now, while torches light ſupply'd,
They march along the mountain ſide.
Soon at the garden they appear,
Judas before had oft been there.
He with a kiſs approach'd the LORD,
And, Hail! my maſter, was his word.
The Saviour calm reply'd: and is
It Judas, with a treacherous kiſs
That thou betrayeſt me! Then he goes,
Full in the face of all his foes;

And aſk'd them whom they ſaught. They cry
Jeſus of Nazareth! Then I
Am he ye ſeek; reply'd the LORD.
They all fall backward at the word.
But recollected ſoon they riſe,
And each his utmoſt courage tries.
They ſeize the Son of GOD, and bind,
Who ſtands all patient and reſign'd;
But in his worthy maſter's cauſe,
Peter his ſword in ſilence draws,
And bold advancing, void of fear,
Cut off the High Prieſt's ſervant's ear.
The LORD beholds, and with a frown,
Commands to lay the weapon down.
He heal'd the wound, his followers fled,
And to Jeruſalem he's led.

HISTORY THE THIRTEENTH.

The Arraignment, Condemnation, and Crucifixion of Christ.

Collected from the four Evangelists.

THE rabble that had seiz'd the LORD,
With Judas, hateful and abhor'd!
By night to Annas* took their way;
They durst not seize him in the day.
With priestly pride, the aged chief,
Full of blind rage and unbelief!
Proceeds the LORD to interrogate:
His doctrine asks him to relate,
And his disciples. Christ declar'd
His doctrine had by all been heard.
To speak in private ne'er he sought,
But boldly in the temple taught.—

* Annas was father-in-law to Caiaphas the high priest, and had formerly officiated in that high character himself.

A surly clown, that did not like
This answer, dar'd the LORD to strike.
To the high priest then Jesus came,
Whose savage heart was all on flame.
He for the priests and doctors sent,
Christ to condemn was their intent.—
A band of ruffians here they brought,
And long for some false witness sought;
But none could find. Then one declar'd,
That he had oft the prisoner heard,
And once he was observ'd to say,
The temple he'd in ruins lay,
And built it up e're the third day.
Then the high priest exalted stands,
And in GOD's awful name demands
The LORD to make it full express'd,
If really he is the Christ.
Jesus this truth would not deny,
But tells them all in his reply;

Hereafter

Hereafter they will see the day,
That will his awful form display,
Amongst the clouds, with terrors crown'd,
To judge the trembling nations round.
His costly robes the high priest tears,
Astonishment and horror stares.
Then instant to the rest applies,
Ye hear his blasphemy, he cries;
All farther quest we may give o'er,
It is enough, we need no more!
What think you now! they jointly cry,
Most surely he deserves to die.

Peter with heavy anxious mind,
Had follow'd on not far behind,
And was by a disciple join'd;
When from the mournful garden, they
Took, with arm'd force, his LORD away,
They in the house admittance gain,
And stand amongst the impious train.

'Twas

'Twas night and cold, a fire they raiſe,
And all ſurround the beamy blaze.
A damſel, ſervant to the prieſt,
That liſtening ſtood amongſt the reſt;
Eager on Peter fix'd her eyes,
This man hath oft been ſeen, ſhe cries,
With Jeſus. Peter quick denies;
At which the cock was heard to crow.
The apoſtle, full of bitter woe,
Still in the high prieſt's palace ſtay'd,
And inſtant, by another maid,
Was charg'd the ſame. But with an oath
Denying, he withſtood them both.
Scarce paſs'd the hour, when one drew near,
Friend to the man that loſt his ear
By Peter's ſword. On him he frown'd:
Did not I ſee thee give the wound,
When in the garden? ſtern he cry'd.
But Peter ſtill his LORD deny'd:

And ſaid, the man he never knew.
The cock, while he proteſted, crew.
Cut to the heart, the ſaint appears,
Withdraws; and ſheds vaſt floods of tears.

While darkneſs cover'd all the ſkies,
Their ſentence paſs'd, the aſſembly riſe.
They to their ſumptuous domes repair,
While in the ſurly ſoldiers care
The LORD remain'd. Contempt and ſcorn
Now was by the Redeemer borne;
Reproach, deriſion, inſult, ſneers,
And all abuſe from them he bears.

When morn brought on the guilty day,
The great Sanhedrim ſat, and they
At early dawn the ſentence give,
That Jeſus muſt no longer live.
For long before they had decreed,
The holy Son of GOD to bleed.
But mighty Rome's imperial ſway,
Judea's ſubject realms obey:

And

And their weak ſenators deplore,
The ſword of Juſtice * their's no more.
To Pilate then the LORD they bring,
And ſay, he makes himſelf a king:
Oppoſes Cæſar's high command:
And raiſes tumults in the land.
'Twas paſchal time, and all the Jews
That would the LORD of life accuſe,
To enter Pilate's hall refuſe,
Becauſe, without pollution, they
Would ſhare the feaſt. To what they ſay
Attention given, the Roman knight
Saw things in their own proper light.
Art thou a king! to Chriſt he cry'd,
To this the Son of GOD reply'd:

The

* Judea, upon the diſgrace of Archelaus, the ſon of Herod, which happened about twenty years before this time, being formed into a Roman province, the power of life and death no longer remained in the hands of the Jews.

The truth my bold accusers miss,
Not of this world my kingdom is.
Then Pilate to the Jews began,
I see no evil in this man!
The envious Jews then rage, and cry
He certainly deserves to die.
Their accusations vehement rise,
But Jesus not one word replies.
From distant Galilee to here,
They cry, his tumults still appear.
When Pilate heard of Galilee,
He cry'd, it not belongs to me,
Or to condemn, or to acquit;
The cause to Herod * I submit.
Then to the king the LORD they sent:
Who much rejoic'd at the event.—

* Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee; the same, who put John the Baptist to death: He was now at Jerusalem.

He long had ardently desir'd
To see the man so much admir'd;
Who such great miracles had wrought.
And when the LORD to him was brought,
The courtiers long expecting stand
To see some wonder from his hand.
Collected in himself, the LORD
No work perform'd, or spoke a word
To what they ask'd him. They amaz'd,
And vex'd with disappointment gaz'd;
With bold derision round him press'd;
Then in a robe of scarlet dress'd,
And, loaded with contempt and scorn,
They him to Pilate back return.
The king his thanks to Pilate sends,
And they from hence grow better friends.
Then to the Jews vex'd Pilate turn'd:
No crime, he cry'd, can be discern'd
In this just man, either by me,
Or by the king of Galilee.

But,

But, as you ſeem to blame him ſo,
I'll ſcourge him, and then let him go.
The Jews more furious raiſe their cry,
And ſtand determin'd he ſhall die.
'Tis cuſtomary at the feaſt,
One malefactor be releas'd,
Pilate reply'd: and I'm inclin'd
That Jeſus ſhall this mercy find.
No! crucify him! roar the Jews:
Barabbas is the man we chooſe.
Jeſus ſhall die! if him you ſpare,
You no firm friend to Cæſar are.
Pilate perceiving it in vain
To ſtrive their clamour to reſtrain,
Was heard for water now to call,
And waſh'd his hands before them all.
Let all take notice that are here,
From this man's blood my hands are clear!
Loudly he cry'd: the guilt on you
Alone will fall! Then roar'd each Jew,

The guilt is ours! and let it be
On us and our posterity!

Then was high heaven's eternal heir
Deliver'd to the soldiers care,*
With orders that they should prepare
For crucifixion. Scourges first
Tore his soft flesh: then loudly burst
Vast peals of laughter, while they dress
Christ in a scarlet cloak and vest.
They for his holy head decreed
A crown of thorns; his hand a reed.
Thus in mock majesty array'd,
The jest of all the crowd he's made:
Who, ere he to his death was led,
Spit in his face, and beat his head.
With heavenly mildness in his eyes,
The LORD submits, but not replies.

And

* St. Mark says, this was at the third hour, which was nine o'clock in the morning. Christ was apprehended the night before.

And every insult which he hears,
In meek resigned silence bears.

Excessive anguish seiz'd the heart
Of traitor Judas, for the part
Which he had acted, Jesus dies!
Iscariot, full of horror, flies
Back to the temple in amaze:
And down the cursed silver lays.
Here, take it back! he wildly said,
Innocent blood I have betray'd:
How great the guilt! Vast horrors tear,
And agonies too great to bear
Swell his false heart: a cord supply'd
The odious means by which he dy'd.

Now Christ to Calvary takes his way:
A cross they on his shoulders lay.
The Saviour faints. A man they find,
To bear the weighty load behind.
Arriving at the mountain's crown,
And setting there the burden down;

While for his foes he pray'd, there he
Was nail'd to the accurſed tree:
And, wide extended on the wood,
Shine the blue veins, and ſtarts the blood.

That the great LORD of life might die
Amongſt the worſt of company,
Two horrid thieves they crucify.
On either ſide their croſſes-ſtand,
Full in his view, and near at hand.
The crowd on high the Saviour views:
And now approach the ſpiteful Jews;
Behold the Son of GOD! they cry:
What pity one ſo great ſhould die!
Due honours we prepare to give;
Come from the croſs, and thou ſhalt live!
The odious thieves on either ſide
Durſt the great Prince of heaven deride:
But one of theſe, before he dy'd,
Repents the wrong, and of the LORD
Rich pardoning mercy he implor'd.

This

Engraved for Fellows's Hist. of the Bible.

Christ's Crucifixion.

This man might on a cross rejoice;
He goes from thence to Paradise.

Beneath the cross with heavy heart,
In all his sorrows bearing part,
Christ's mournful mother he beheld,
By bitter anguish there compell'd.
And, while her tears in rivers ran,
She looks upon her suffering son.
The lov'd disciple too stood by;
To whom the Lord was heard to cry,
Behold thy mother in the fair,
With holy love and pious care.
Behold thy lord! Good John obey'd,
The motion which his Master made,
With ready heart, without delay,
And took the mournful dame away.

Though rais'd on his meridian throne,
The day's bright king but faintly shone:
Involv'd in mists he takes his way,
And, gloomy, gives the guilty day.

This man might on a croſs rejoice,
He goes from thence to Paradiſe.
Beneath the croſs with heavy heart,
In all his ſorrows bearing part,
Chriſt's mournful mother he beheld,
By bitter anguiſh there compell'd.
And, while her tears in rivers run,
She looks upon her ſuffering ſon.
The lov'd diſciple too ſtood by:
To whom the LORD was heard to cry,
Behold thy mother! To the fair,
With holy love and pious care,
Behold thy ſon! Good John obey'd,
The motion which his Maſter made,
With ready heart, without delay,
And took the mournful dame away.
Though rais'd on his meridian throne,
The day's bright king but faintly ſhone:
Involv'd in miſts he takes his way,
And, gloomy, gives the guilty day.

When o'er his face thick darkneſs flies;
And inſtant blots him from the ſkies.
Three horrid hours the night remain'd,
And wrapt in ſhades the guilty land.
The fourth ſad hour the day reſtor'd,
When deadly anguiſh ſeiz'd the LORD:
My GOD! my GOD! he cries: Ah, why
Haſt thou forſaken me! One nigh
With vinegar a ſpunge ſupply'd;
Chriſt taſted, bow'd his head, and dy'd.

THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK X.

FROM THE

Death of CHRIST, to the Destruction of Jerusalem:

CONTAINING

The Transactions of about 40 Years.

HISTORY THE FIRST.

The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ.

Collected from the Four Evangelists.

SOON as the LORD resign'd his breath,
And sunk into the arms of death,
The temple shook at the event,
And the rich vail in twain was rent;
A furious earthquake tore the ground,
And rock'd the trembling nation round.
The graves were open'd. Various dead
Arose, and o'er the city spread.
Before the evening clos'd the day,
The assembled Jews to Pilate pray
That no dead body may remain
The sabbath's holy rest to stain.
The Roman soldiers then drew nigh;
And that the wretches soon might die,

They break their legs. The LORD was dead
Yet with a ſpear his blood they ſhed:
His ſacred ſide the javelin tore,
Whence guſh'd forth water mix'd with gore.
Joſeph, a Jew of wealth and fame,
Before ſun-ſet to Pilate came,
And begg'd the body of the LORD;
Whom he believ'd in, and ador'd.
Pilate conſents. The pious chief
With decent care, and ſolemn grief,
In his own tomb the body laid.
The tomb was in a garden made,
Hewn in the rock; and with a ſtone
The door was clos'd. It was well known
Amongſt the Jews, that Chriſt had ſaid,
On the third day he from the dead
Should riſe triumphant. For this cauſe
Pilate a band of ſoldiers draws
To guard the tomb: and then they ſeal
The ſtone, that no deceit prevail.

The

They break their legs. The Lord was dead
Yet with a pierc'd his blood they shed:
His sacred side the javelin tore,
Whence gush'd forth water mix'd with gore.
Joseph, a Jew of wealth and fame,
Before Pontius Pilate came,
And begg'd the body of the Lord;
Whom he believed, and
Pilate consented. The
With
In his own tomb the body
The tomb was in a garden made,
Hewn in the rock, and
The door was clos'd. It was well known
Among the Jews, that Christ had said
On the third day he from the dead
Should rise triumphant.
Pilate a band of soldiers gave,
To guard the tomb: and then they seal
The stone, that no deceit prevail.

Engraved for Fellows's Illus. of the Bible.

Christ's Resurrection.

The firſt night paſs'd, and all was ſtill.
The ſabbath reſt the Jews fulfil.
But ere the next bright morning roſe,
A dreadful ſtorm with fury blows:
And while the rocks an earthquake rends,
A mighty angel ſwift deſcends.
His eyes like lightning flaſh'd: and white
His robes as pureſt beams of light.
Aghaſt, confounded, and amaz'd,
The ſhivering ſoldiers on him gaz'd;
While from the tomb the ſtone he roll'd,
And ſat upon it. They behold
The LORD in boundleſs glory riſe:
And to the town, in terror flies
The wild aſtoniſh'd Roman guard.
When the chief prieſts theſe wonders heard,
They by a bribe the men perſuade;
Who (as the prieſts enjoin'd them) ſaid,
That while in ſleep the ſoldiers lay,
Chriſt's body had been ſtol'n away

By

By his disciples. To the tomb
At early dawn, the Mary's * come;
With other pious matrons join'd,
All bringing spices. They design'd
To embalm the corps; but found the stone
Was roll'd away; the guard was gone.
The sacred dead they could not find.
But soon appear'd two men, that shin'd
In heavenly youth, and bright array'd:
Who to the mourning matrons said;
Daughters of Sion! well we know
The mournful cause of all your woe:
In sad assemblage you appear,
To seek the man that is not here.
Jesus of Nazareth you admir'd;
Who on the cross so late expir'd.
Not death's cold arms could him detain;
He's ris'n; and now begins his reign.

Tell

* Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James.

Tell his disciples. Peter tell,
He triumphs o'er the powers of hell!
At early dawn this morn he rose.
To Galilee he with you goes.
The pious matrons, much afraid,
Scarce knew what the bright angels said;
And from the tomb they trembling fled.
To the apostles Mary went:
From her they learn the strange event
Known at the tomb. Surpris'd they hear
That Christ's dead body is not there.
Good Peter runs, with anxious mind,
And John the hasty journey join'd.
Peter beheld with wondering eye,
The linen clothes and napkin lie,
But saw no more. Mary returns,
For still her heart with anguish burns,
And in the grave appear'd in sight
Two shining angels, rob'd in white.

Why

Why weepeſt thou! ſoft was their word.
Mary replies; I've loſt my LORD!
Jeſus ſtood by; her words he heard:
But like the gardener appear'd.
Mary with anguiſh him ſurvey'd.
O tell me where my LORD is laid!
As thus ſhe ſpake, with weeping eyes,
In his own form the LORD replies,
Mary! The pleaſing voice ſhe knew,
And at his feet herſelf ſhe threw.
But e'er ſhe kiſs'd them, Chriſt rejoins,
While all his form with glory ſhines,
To touch me, Mary, is not well:
But go; and my dear Brethren tell,
That I aſcend to the abode
Of my great Father, and my GOD;
Nor only mine, but yours. With joy
Mary's ſwift feet to Salem fly:
Where the ſad train in ſilence wait;
Who hear the joyful fair relate,

That ſhe had ſeen the LORD. That day,
The other women on the way
From the cold grave, like favour found;
And ſpread the wonderous tidings round.
But all the apoſtolic train
Thought it ſome whimſies of the brain;
It not appearing clearly then
That Chriſt muſt die, and riſe again.
Before cool evening clos'd the day,
As two diſciples took their way
To fair Emmaus: on the road
Appear'd to them the Son of GOD.
He like a traveller appear'd;
And join'd in the diſcourſe he heard.
The crucifixion was the theme;
Sad was the event, and ſtrange to them:
For ſuch great works from Chriſt were ſeen
They thought he had MESSIAH been,
And ſtranger ſtill, that day they heard
He to their women had appear'd.

To this the ſtranger ſoon replies;
That from the ancient prophecies
It muſt appear to every eye,
That great MESSIAH was to die.
Arriving at their journey's end,
With them the LORD will condeſcend
To take refreſhment. When at meat,
He bleſs'd the bread, and gave to eat.
In his own form the LORD they view;
Who inſtant from their ſight withdrew.
Then while their hearts within them burn,
They to Jeruſalem return.
A glad aſſembly there they find:
Who in their joy and wonder join'd.
And from their brethren now they heard,
That Chriſt to Peter had appear'd.
While theſe events freſh wonder claim,
Jeſus himſelf amongſt them came;
The doors being ſhut. With ſhivering fear
At firſt they ſee the LORD appear;

But

But he, with looks of tendereſt love,
Proceeds their ſcruples to remove;
Bids them behold his hands and feet:
And aſks them what they have to eat.
While this they ſee the LORD receive,
With joy and wonder they believe.

When thus the Saviour deign'd to appear,
The apoſtle Thomas was not there.
I'll not believe, unleſs, ſaid he,
His wounded hands and feet I ſee;
And thruſt my hand into his ſide.
Nor was the bold demand deny'd.
For eight days after, to the train,
The Prince of Peace appear'd again.
To Thomas then the LORD applies,
And every doubt he ſatisfies.
My LORD! my GOD! the good man cries.

Next by the ſounding ſea-beat ſhore,
Where the wild winds and billows roar,

The LORD appear'd. The apoſtle train
All the long night had toil'd in vain.
No fiſh were taken. Morning roſe;
Himſelf the great Redeemer ſhews
On the ſea-ſide. The net they throw
By his direction; and ſoon know
From their ſucceſs, it is the LORD,
Whom they with love and joy ador'd.
Upon a lofty mountain's crown
In Galilee, the LORD came down.
A large aſſembly * ſaw him there,
And worſhip with religious fear.
To Salem then, with boundleſs joys
The apoſtles and diſciples riſe.
And as the twelve of food partake,
Jeſus appear'd: and thus he ſpake:
No longer, brethren, in your mind
Let unbelief reception find:
Nor yet eſteem it ſtrange, that I
Was left to ſuffer and to die.

But

* It is ſuppoſed, that it was at this time that the LORD appeared to five hundred diſciples at once.

But know, 'twas fix'd in heaven's decree,
That all these wonderous things should be.
View scripture in its proper light,
And you'll perceive that all was right.
These great events you must proclaim;
Amd through the nations bear my name.
To all the world my gospel give;
And whosoe'er believes shall live.
But who rejects the heavenly news,
Him wrath, and double death pursues.
The men that shall receive the same,
Baptize them in the triple name
Of God. Then teach them to obey,
And follow where I lead the way.
Be not of wicked men afraid;
But go, depending on my aid.
Each shall, where'er his course proceeds,
Work by my name immortal deeds.
Hell's king shall tremble on his throne;
And earth's wide empire be my own.

In the great work with gladneſs join,
For all the heavens and earth are mine.
Yet to the taſk forbear to riſe
Till aid be ſent you from the ſkies.
Here tarry till that aid I ſend,
Or you my preſence ſhall attend,
Till his long courſe old time ſhall end.
Thus having ſpoke, without delay,
To Bethany they take their way.
And the Redeemer, ere he roſe,
His bleſſing on them all beſtows.
Aſcending then in open view,
Their eager eyes their LORD purſue,
Till hid behind a cloud. Two men
In ſhining robes appearing then:
Ye men of Galilee! each cries,
Why ſtand ye gazing at the ſkies!
Jeſus, your maſter and your friend;
Whom you this moment ſaw aſcend,

To

To judge the world ſhall thus come down.
Let ſinners tremble at his frown.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

The Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, and the firſt Preaching of the Apoſtles.

Acts, ch. ii.

WHEN thus the LORD was ſeen to riſe
Triumphant to his native ſkies,
Back to Jeruſalem return'
The apoſtles, and no longer mourn.
But in a joint aſſembly pray'd,
Expecting what the LORD had ſaid.
When ſoon amongſt them Peter roſe,
And an apoſtle then they choſe,
By his advice, in Judas' room;
And waited till the Spirit come,
In expectation, full ten days,
At Zion the aſſembly ſtays.

When

When, rushing like a mighty wind,
An heart-inflaming power they find.
And cloven tongues, like fiery flame,
O'er all their heads directly came.
Now great ideas fill each soul,
And floods of joy upon them roll;
Light, love, and truth all glorious rise.
The work of God before them lies:
And every spirit overflows
With ardor, more than nature knows.
The joyful train, without delay,
Begin the business of the day:
The glorious gospel now proclaim,
And boldly preach in Jesus' name.
Not to their native tongue confin'd,
But instant, on their opening mind,
All learning rose. And in their turn
The heavenly truth all strangers learn
In their own tongue, correct and free
Whate'er their land, or language be.

The

The city ſtood amaz'd to ſee
The ſimple ſwains of Galilee,
(Where her proud head no ſcience rear'd)
In every learned language heard.
Vaſt crowds about the apoſtles preſs'd,
And ſome made all theſe things their jeſt.
Peter, conſpicuous in the throng,
Spake boldly in his native tongue:
Addreſs'd his countrymen the Jews,
And with ſuch evidence purſues
His noble theme, their guilt they ſee;
And from denounced vengeance flee.
Three thouſand then the train baptize,
And great and laſting were their joys.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

The lame Man restored in the Temple: And the Apostles twice imprisoned, and released.

Acts, ch. iii, iv, v.

NOW at the appointed hour of prayer,
Peter and John with joy repair
To join the temple worship. There
An helpless cripple begging lies.
On him good Peter fix'd his eyes.
The cripple begs: The saint replies,
Silver and gold I've none to give:
Such as I have thou shalt receive.
Jesus of Nazareth, is a name
Which we to all the world proclaim.
And in this mighty name, I say,
Rise on thy feet, and go thy way.
Immediate rising at the word,
He walk'd, and leap'd, and prais'd the LORD:

And

And then into the temple went,
Rejoicing in the great event.
The crowd this deed with wonder view;
The helpless cripple well they knew:
And to the sacred porch they ran,
Where stood the apostles and the man.
Then Peter, in his Master's cause,
The whole attention quickly draws:
And shews, that by his mighty name
The man was sound, who late was lame.
The priests and rulers heard the news;
And full of malice came the Jews.
The prison must the saints contain.
But Peter had not preach'd in vain;
Five thousand souls receiv'd the word,
With joy believ'd, and own'd the LORD.
Before the counsel stood next day
The two apostles. Boldly they

Declare from Jesus' mighty name
The wonderous power of healing came:
And him the Saviour they proclaim.

The priests and doctors of the law
These two plain men with wonder saw,
And recollected they had been
With the Redeemer often seen.
The miracle, so lately wrought,
Was worthy of regard, they thought:
And that it might no further spread,
'Twas best, the whole assembly said,
Lest all the wondering town should know,
To threaten them, and let them go.
Before them the apostles stand,
And fearless hear the stern command
Which from the great sanhedrim came,
To preach no more in Jesus' name.
Being thus dismiss'd, with ardent mind
They soon their own companions join'd:

To

To heaven their prayers and praiſes riſe:
And thence receiving freſh ſupplies,
While with vaſt joy their ſpirits flame,
The glorious goſpel they proclaim.
Then to the temple boldly goes
The apoſtle train, and wonders ſhews:
The aſtoniſh'd nation crowds around;
The ſick and the diſeaſed found
Immediate cures. The devils roar,
And dare attempt their prey no more.
With vengeful ſpirits all on flame,
Then the high prieſt and rulers came:
And, their proceedings to prevent,
The apoſtles are to priſon ſent.
Not long in durance they remain;
But in the temple ſtand again,
By heavenly power releas'd. Next day
The Jews a counſel call'd; and they
Send for the priſoners. In amaze
The whole aſſembled counſel gaze.

The prison fast was shut; they hear,
When open'd, not a soul was there.
While these events their wonder claim,
A person from the temple came:
The men ye yesterday detain'd,
Now in the temple preaching stand,
In haste he cry'd. The counsel send,
And civil ask them to attend:
For they a tumult fear'd. They came.
Did not we charge you in this name
No more to preach! the high priest cries:
But through the town your doctrine flies;
And fain would bring upon our head
Your Master's blood, so lately shed.
To this the apostles jointly say,
That God's commands they must obey;
And would to latest time maintain,
That Jesus was unjustly slain.
The elders foam with rage, and cry,
The prisoners all deserve to die.

Their

Their furious ſpirits to compoſe,
Rever'd by all, Gamaliel roſe,
With learning and with wiſdom crown'd,
And for his counſels high renown'd:
The apoſtles taken from the bar,
Thus his advice the elders hear:
Ye men of Iſrael! I adviſe
You to be wary, and be wiſe:
And let your wiſdom now be ſhewn,
By letting all theſe men alone.
For all impoſture and deceit
Is ſure to ſink with its own weight,
Boaſted Theudas, where is he!
And Judas bold of Galilee!
Like one of theſe ſhall Jeſus be,
If a deceiver. But if true,
His cauſe will ne'er be cruſh'd by you.
In vain man's pride with folly joins
To cruſh JEHOVAH's great deſigns.

Though

Though all the powers on earth unite,
In vain with Israel's God they fight.
Vast shouts of honour and applause
The speech of great Gamaliel draws.
The prosecution they give o'er,
And charge the men to preach no more:
Then let them go. The apostles came,
Rejoicing that they suffer shame
For Jesus' sake. Nor fear'd they ought,
But daily in the temple taught.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts, ch. v.

THOSE who believ'd in Jesus' name,
Felt heavenly love so brightly flame,
That full of peace, and growing joys,
All worldly riches they despise.

Nor

Nor was there one amongſt the train,
That need of poverty complain:
For thoſe who earthly good poſſeſs'd,
Diſtributed amongſt the reſt.
Whoe'er did large poſſeſſions hold,
With open heart their land they ſold:
Great were the ſums which hence ariſe,
And in the apoſtles power it lies,
Amongſt the brethren to divide,
That all the poor might be ſupply'd.
One Ananias ſold his land,
And gave into the apoſtles hand
Part of the price: But part would ſave,
Pretending that the whole he gave.
To Peter this deceit was known:
The man his wickedneſs was ſhewn;
And told, it was to GOD he ly'd:
When inſtant he fell down, and dy'd.
His wife was abſent. When ſhe came,
She ſtill perſiſted in the ſame;

Her husband's death unknown. She dies;
And joins in death, who join'd in lies,
Her guilty lord. The rumour spread,
And fill'd the saints with holy dread.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

The Death of Stephen.

Acts, ch. vi. vii.

BUT when the church grew wide and large,
The apostles with the weighty charge
Were weary'd: and seven deacons chose,
And in his province each bestows.
Stephen amongst the seven was known,
And every virtue was his own:
Full of the Spirit, faith, and love,
His noble conduct all approve:
His honest heart was all on flame,
He wonders wrought in Jesus' name:

Disputed

Disputed with the gospel's foes,
And oft confounds whoe'er oppose.
This rouz'd the vengeance of the train,
Who had withstood the truth in vain.
False witness they procure; and he
By them is charg'd with blasphemy.
Before the council soon he stands;
And haughty the high priest demands
To know the truth. Stephen replies,
With heavenly brightness in his eyes,
And like an angel spake. To trace
The conduct of the chosen race,
At faithful Abraham he begins,
And gives a list of Israel's sins:
Their wickedness he will maintain,
And shews they have the prophets slain;
And, to augment the horrid guilt
Of all the blood their fathers spilt,
The Son of God, with horrid pride
The present Jews had crucify'd.

This just reproof with wrath they hear,
Some gnash their teeth, and others sneer.
When looking up, the good man cries:
I see my Saviour in the skies!
He lives! he reigns! Each Jew appears
To foam with rage. They stop their ears:
Upon him run with one accord;
And, while he call'd upon the LORD
Not to avenge his guiltless death,
They with huge stones beat out his breath.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

Philip preaches at Samaria, and converts the Ethiopian eunuch.

Acts, ch. viii.

NOW Philip to Samaria goes,
And gospel truth sublimely flows,
Warm from his heart, the country round,
And with success his words were crown'd.

From

From Ethiopia's ſun-burnt ſoil,
Where through vaſt regions runs the Nile,
An eunuch chief, of wealth and fame,
To worſhip in the temple came.
Returning joyful home, the ſage
Perus'd the deep prophetic page:
Of Jeſus read, as on he went,
But doubted whom the prophet meant.
Philip approach'd, by heaven's command,
And gave the chief to underſtand,
That at Jeruſalem had been
The great MESSIAH lately ſeen;
Whom the old prophets all proclaim:
Jeſus of Nazareth was his name:
The Son of GOD, the heir of heaven,
Who was for man's ſalvation given.
The eunuch prince with joy receiv'd
The heavenly word; in Chriſt believ'd:
Was then baptiz'd without delay,
And went rejoicing on his way.

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

The Gospel preached to the Gentiles.

Acts, ch. x. xi.

AT fair Cesarea dwelt in fame
A man that own'd the Roman name,
Cornelius call'd: whom nature's laws
Had led to the Supreme First Cause:
To the true God he daily pray'd,
And liv'd depending on his aid.
One evening flash'd before his sight
A glorious blaze of heavenly light;
An angel form he saw appear,
Who told him, if the truth he'd hear,
To send to Joppa's sea-beat shore,
And there good Peter's aid implore:
At the sea-side the saint remain'd;
Simon, a tanner, own'd the land.

With

With joyful heart Cornelius ſent;
And anxious waits the great event.
When near the town the ſervants draw,
Peter a wonderous viſion ſaw;
Which gave the ſaint to underſtand,
That he muſt go at GOD's command;
And the rich goſpel's truths explain
To men the Jews might think unclean.
The men arrive; their buſineſs ſhew;
Peter reſolves with them to go.
And at Cornelius, houſe attends
A band of relatives and friends.
Peter with plainneſs preach'd the LORD;
They all receiv'd the heavenly word:
For while they hear the joyful ſound,
The Holy Spirit's power they found
Warm every heart. To GOD they raiſe
Immortal ſongs of love and praiſe.
As Peter will not GOD withſtand,
He all baptizes out of hand.

Earneſt

Earneſt requeſt to him they made,
And ſome few days he with them ſtay'd.
At Salem the apoſtles learn'd,
Peter had to the Gentiles turn'd,
And preach'd the goſpel. Him they blame:
Then to defend himſelf he came.
And when the caſe was clearly known,
The mighty power of GOD they own:
To him with joy their ſongs they raiſe:
How wiſe and good are all his ways!

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

The Perſecution of the Church by the Jewiſh Prieſts and Elders, and by Herod Agrippa.

Acts, ch. xii.

WHEN holy Stephen was no more,
The Jews, with growing rancour, roar
Againſt the truth. The elders join'd
With Saul of Tarſus, one whoſe mind

Was

Was full of envy, active, shrewd,
The Christians he with rage pursu'd:
The name of Jesus he disdain'd,
And chas'd his followers from the land.
These, forc'd to leave their native home,
Abroad in distant nations roam,
And preach the gospel where they come.

But Herod,* grown a mighty king
By Roman power, seeking to bring
Himself in favour with the Jews,
The Christian name with rage pursues.
James, the apostle of the LORD,
Who lov'd his name, and preach'd his word,
He put to death. The Jews he pleas'd;
And to oblige them Peter seiz'd.
In prison he the good man cast,
Designing, when the feast † was past,

* Herod Agrippa, grandson to Herod the Great; who having obtained the favour of the Emperor Claudius, he gave him the kingdoms of Judea and Chacis.

† The passover.

To bring him forth, and let him die.
Peter in favour ſtood ſo high
Amongſt the Chriſtians, that his name:
Vaſt multitudes with joy proclaim:
Immortal deeds his honour ſpread,
Who rais'd Tabitha from the dead:
And, while he in the priſon lay,
The church preſented, night and day,
Before the LORD her fervent prayer,
That GOD would his apoſtle ſpare.
Now night in darkneſs held her throne:
The tyrant's baſe deſign was known.
Between two ſoldiers Peter lay;
Sentenc'd to death the following day.
But from the ſkies an angel falls,
And ſhines within the priſon walls:
With his ſoft touch the ſaint awoke;
He ſmil'd around, and thus he ſpoke:
Peter, ariſe! he hears the call,
And from his limbs the fetters fall.

Put on thy cloaths, and follow me!
The ſaint obeys; but ſcarcely he
Knew what he did, or where he goes;
The whole ſo like a viſion ſhews.
The double guard unſeen they paſt;
The iron gate, ſtrong, heavy, vaſt,
Untouch'd flies open. Inſtant they
Thro' the dark ſtreet purſu'd their way,
While the whole town in ſilence lay.
The angel now no longer ſtays:
The apoſtle ſtands in glad amaze;
But recollected, will appear
At Mary's houſe. The brethren there,
All night aſſembled, ſeek the ſkies:
Near to each heart good Peter lies.
The apoſtle knocks: his voice they hear:
To let him in at firſt they fear;
At length take courage. He declares,
That God, in anſwer to their prayers,

Hath by his angel ſet him free.
Aſtoniſh'd they the good man ſee;
While joy in every boſom flows,
Good Peter out of danger goes.

When morning ſhone, the waking guard
In vaſt amazement wildly ſtar'd.
The priſoner loſt, they could not gueſs
The means by which he 'ſcap'd. No leſs
The gloomy tyrant rag'd, to find
The man ſet free, whom he aſſign'd
To inſtant death. The country round
Was ſearch'd, but Peter was not found.
Then from the throne the orders fly,
Which doom the guiltleſs guard to die.

To fair Ceſarea quickly then
The king remov'd his court. The men
Of Tyre and Sidon to him ſend,
And make his chamberlain their friend,
To ſue for peace. When on his throne,
In royal robes, the monarch ſhone:

And

Engraved for Fellows's Hist. of the Bible.

The Conversion of Saul.

And in ſo eloquent a ſtrain
From thence addreſs'd the liſtening train;
Before his ſeat they proſtrate lie;
It is the voice of GOD! they cry.
The haughty king accepts the praiſe:
But heavenly vengeance, riſing, lays
The boaſter low. And for his pride,
Smitten with dire diſeaſe, he dy'd.

HISTORY THE NINTH.

The Converſion of the great Apoſtle Paul. His extenſive Labours and uncommon Sufferings. And the Spreading of the Goſpel through various Kingdoms by his Miniſtry, and that of the other Apoſtles.

Acts, ch. ix. & xiii. to the End.

WHEN Stephen to his death was led,
And in the cauſe of Jeſus bled;
A young man, who from Tarſus came,
Strove to blow up the raging flame
Of perſecution. Saul his name,

A pupil

A pupil of Gamaliel. He,
Full of blind fury, would not see
His maſter's moderation right:
But ſtrove inceſſant day and night,
Chriſt's church, juſt riſing, to confound;
And ſhake the fabric to the ground.
Whoe'er believ'd in Jeſus' name,
The ſubject of his hate became:
And more than all the cruel Jews,
He them with ceaſeleſs rage purſues.
Nor in Jeruſalem alone,
His rage againſt the church was ſhewn.
To diſtant realms his fury flies:
And who believes in Jeſus dies.
From the high-prieſt commiſſion gain'd,
He goes, with hatred unreſtrain'd,
To fair Damaſcus, high in fame,
And blood and ſlaughter were his aim.
The city ſcarce appear'd in ſight,
Before a ſudden blaze of light,

By

By far more powerful than the ſun,
Around the impious party ſhone.
The beamy blaze ſurpriz'd them all,
And proſtrate to the ground they fall.
Then to the chief the Saviour ſpake,
Reveal'd himſelf: and bid him make
Now for Damaſcus, and remain
Till he ſhould further knowledge gain
Of heaven's high will. This Saul obeys.
But by the bright ſurrounding blaze,
Had loſt his ſight. Three days he lay
O'erwhelm'd with terror and diſmay.
Now plainly ſaw his former guilt:
And trembled at the blood he ſpilt.
Till God, propitious to his prayers,
Sends to relieve his anxious cares,
Good Ananias: and his ſight
He now receives. Vaſt floods of light,
And joy and glory on him roll;
Diſpel the darkneſs of his ſoul;

And make him forward to proclaim
Salvation thro' a Saviour's name.
Now, with ſurpaſſing zeal and care,
And vigilance, he would not ſpare
Thro' various diſtant lands to bear
The glorious goſpel's joyful ſound:
And man's weak reaſonings to confound.
Firſt at Damaſcus he was heard,
Arabia heavenly truth rever'd
Warm from his heart. And then appear'd
At Salem's guilty towers, the chief,
Who late had fill'd the church with grief.
Him with ſurprize the apoſtles view,
Nor can they think his heart is true.
But he reveals the heavenly call,
And in the work exceeds them all.
By heaven's direction being join'd
By Barnabas: with ardent mind,
The brother ſaints the goſpel give,
And various nations hear and live.

Oppos'd on Cyprus' verdant ſhore,
Bar-Jeſus ſaw the light no more.
A man, who had been always lame,
Full in their view at Lyſtra came.
He walks, when Paul had bid him riſe.
The gods are come! the city cries,
The prieſts prepare the ſacrifice.
But ſoon on different views proceed,
And doom the holy men to bleed.
Great Paul being ſton'd, he dead appears,
The Chriſtians ſhed vaſt floods of tears;
And crowd around him. He aroſe,
And the next day to Derbe goes.
At Antioch various Chriſtian Jews,
The Gentile converts much accuſe,
Since circumciſion they refuſe.
Then to Jeruſalem * they go,
The Apoſtles' will, in this, to know.

* Paul and Barnabas went to Jeruſalem on this occaſion, and brought the determination back to Antioch.

And by the assembly 'twas decreed,
That of this rite there was no need.

Now with great Paul good Silas goes,
And Philippi the gospel knows.
A damsel, whom a fiend possess'd,
Had much her master's wealth increas'd
By divination. Paul's command
The power infernal can't withstand.
The dæmon flees. She leaves the trade,
The master then an uproar made.
The saints in prison are detain'd.
At night an earthquake shakes the land.
The fetters burst, and open fly
The prison doors. The goalers cry;
The good men heard; and pacify
The raging chief: who thence believes,
And soon baptismal rites receives.
When, by the magistrates command,
Good Paul and Silas leave the land.

The

The holy men depart in peace,
And carry on the work thro' Greece.
At length great Paul to Athens * came,
Renown'd for learning's mighty name
All o'er the world; and gospel brought
To where great Plato late had taught.
The unity of heaven's Supreme,
And the Redeemer's mighty name,
The apostle boldly would maintain,
Amongst the philosophic train.

To Corinth then good Paul proceeds,
But from the Jews dissention breeds.
To Gallio they the saints accuse,
But he to hear them will refuse:
Determin'd, he the Christians spares,
And for the tumult nothing cares.

At

* The best account of these parts, as well as the world in general, may be seen in Mr. Moore's Collection of Voyages and Travels, now publishing in weekly numbers, adorned with fine copper-plates, and comprehending all the late discoveries in the South Seas.

At Ephesus then Paul appear'd,
Where stood Diana's temple, rear'd
On mighty columns. Jesus' name
The great apostle would proclaim.
The priests and craftsmen, much afraid,
That they from hence should lose their trade,
Incense the townsmen; soon they rise,
And shout Diana to the skies.

Now to Jerusalem assign'd,
The pious chief with ardent mind,
Goes thro' the churches: takes his leave,
And deigns his last advice to give.
When to the guilty town he came,
The wicked Jews were all on flame.
Soon was he from the temple torn,
And, by their fury overborne,
Had been destroy'd: but was that hour
Protected by the Roman Power.
The Jews, with unabating rage,
In joint conspiracy engage

To give him death. This to prevent,
To fair Cesarea he is sent;
But the high priest and Jews appear,
And furiously accuse him there.
Paul before Felix pleads his cause,
And makes him tremble. Then the Jews,
To Portius Festus, Paul accuse;
When to Jerusalem he came:
And sudden vengeance was their aim.
Send for him here, they jointly say,
(Thinking to kill him on the way)
The chief declares, that Paul shall stay.
Soon to Cesarea Festus came,
And there the Jews with vengeful aim
Accuse the saint. To 'scape their hands,
Of Cæsar audience he demands.
Agrippa * to Cesarea came,
Appriz'd of the apostle's fame.

He

* King Agrippa was son to Herod Agrippa, who put the apostle James to death.

He asks to hear him. Then his cause
The great apostle pleads; and draws
Such favour from the affected throne,
The listening king himself must own
Almost a Christian. Soon to Rome
They see the lov'd apostle come,
O'er wintry seas. And in the way
Shipwreck'd on Malta's isle he lay.
Two years at Rome he spread around
The glorious gospel's joyful sound:
These powerful truths he would maintain
In horrid Nero's bloody reign;
Till by the tyrant's rage and pride,*
The great apostle nobly dy'd.

In the mean time the Christian name
To earth's remotest regions came.
The apostles bore the joyful sound
With zeal the rugged globe around:
The world with heavenly truth supply'd,
And in their Master's cause they dy'd.

* Most of St. Paul's epistles were written from Rome.

HISTORY THE TENTH.

The Banishment of the Apostle John to the Island of Patmos, where he receives his Revelation.

Rev. ch. i.

WHEN fierce Domitian held the sway,
And Rome's great men his laws obey,
Against the Christian cause and name
His edict full of fury came;
And by his cruel rage and pride
Vast numbers of the Christians dy'd.
By his command, in banishment
The lov'd apostle John was sent
To Patmos' isle. Favour'd by heaven,
To him, in vision, here was given
A view of things to come. He knows
The end of all the church's foes;
Sees Antichrist both rise and fall,
And fire and darkness swallow all.

While angels through the ſkies proclaim
The glorious victories of the Lamb.
Before this great apoſtle dy'd,
The wicked city was deſtroy'd,
Where Jeſus Chriſt was crucify'd.
By pride and ſtubbornneſs impell'd,
Againſt the Romans they rebell'd:
Then valiant Titus took the field.
The faithleſs city would not yield,
Till drench'd in ſlaughter, blood, and fire,
By myriads her falſe ſons expire:
The temple burns; and on her walls
The juſt denounced vengeance falls:
Her ſtreams run blood; and all behold
The miſeries which the LORD foretold.
And ſhe (now vile in heathen eyes)
An awful heap of ruins lies:
While her falſe ſons, by vengeance hurl'd,
Like chaff are ſcatter'd o'er the world.

FINIS.